



Drawing    *Beaux-arts*  
Painter    *Schilderkunst*  
Mahlerey    *Practic*  
Schilderboeck    *Academia*  
*Theory*    *notions*  
*Artis pictoriae*    *Kunste*  
*Painting*    *COLOURING*  
Peintre    *Pittura*  
die Haupt-Farben    *Zeichen*

*LexArt*  
*Words for Painting*

(France, Germany, England, The Netherlands, 1600-1750)

*Edited by*

*Michèle-Caroline HECK*



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LexArt  
Words for Painting

*(France, Germany, England, The Netherlands, 1600–1750)*



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Collection « Arts »  
Série *Théorie des Arts*

LexArt  
Words for Painting

*(France, Germany, England, The Netherlands, 1600–1750)*

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2018

PRESSES UNIVERSITAIRES DE LA MÉDITERRANÉE

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*The entitled thematic series Théories des Arts is dedicated to the study and presentation of artistic theories from the Renaissance to the present day. This series includes collective and interdisciplinary works on art theory, as well as monographic studies.*

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# Introduction

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*LexArt. Words for Painting* is presented in the form of a dictionary and is the result of a research project on the writings on art published between 1600 and 1750 in France, Germany, England and the Netherlands. This research was conducted within the context of the *LexArt. Words for art: the rise of a terminology in Europe (1600–1750)* project, financed by the European Research Council (ERC- Advanced Grant no. 323761, 2013-2018).

The chronological and geographical limitations of this exploration of the terms and notions were justified by the growing importance, in both number and diversity, of the publications on art in Northern Europe from 1600 onwards, and more particularly from 1604, the year of publication of Karel Van Mander's *Het Schilder-Boeck* until 1750, a more flexible date depending on the countries studied. This date marked a significant transformation in what can be called art theory, as well as its mutation into aesthetics (*Ästhetik*), a term used at that time by Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten.<sup>1</sup> We focused on the writings published to the north of the Alps. On the one hand, German, Dutch and English texts and, to a lesser degree, French texts have been the subject of less study. On the other, the research carried out on Italian texts has been considerable and has often served as the basis for our current view of art theory. But this theory has too often been studied through the prism of these Italian texts, making it important to revisit them, revealing that they are often inadequate. As no works on art theory, and no translations, were published in the Baltic countries or Eastern Europe within the chronological limits that we set, they were not included in our study.

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1. Alexander Gottlieb BAUMGARTEN, *Aesthetica*, Frankfurt/Oder, 1750.



Broadening the study to several countries and taking into account the more global geographical area of Northern Europe also made possible a new line of attack. It is certainly possible to evoke the fragmentation of identities, but at the same time, there are common conceptions of painting. This is how an intersecting history emerged, with no fixed identity and no allegiance restricted to a particular thought. The circuits through which the concepts travelled in Europe were not fixed, and concepts did not develop in an unequivocal manner. They were the result of appropriation, rooted in differing semantic environments, and in specific milieus. More than a single entity, this geographical area was effectively characterised by diversity in which a wide range of artistic creations thrived, and in which unity was created by the circulation of people, of knowledge and of artistic practices. Through the mobility of artists, and through the production and diffusion of the writings on art, a European conscience started to develop in a *République des arts* which was constructed in the image of the *République des lettres*.<sup>1</sup>

We conducted our research from a double point of view, both diachronic, questioning how these notions and concepts were received, and synchronic, taking an interest in their contextualisation. We thus examined the various meanings of a word from the perspective of a confrontation between the establishment of an artistic concept on the one hand, and the practice on the other, given that in the 17th century art theory was an explanation of practice. We then examined the meaning of the word, not in its general and contemporary sense, but on the basis of the one that was intended in the context of the text studied.

## 1 Why a Dictionary of Terms and Concepts?

*LexArt. Les mots de la peinture* has been conceived in the form of a dictionary, and is composed of 77 articles presenting synthesis of almost 250 notions. Rather than presenting a short article on each one, we preferred the form of longer essays constructed around cross-issues by grouping different concepts. These concepts appeared significant for the theory as it was laid out in the texts on artistic literature from

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1. Françoise WAQUET, *La République des Lettres*, Paris, Bruxelles, 1997; Marc FUMAROLI, *Quand l'Europe parlait français*, Paris, 2014; Marc FUMAROLI, *La République des Lettres*, Paris, 2015; Antoine ARJAKOVSKY, *Histoire de la conscience européenne*, Paris, 2016; Thomas SERRIER, Étienne FRANÇOIS, *Europa. Notre histoire. L'héritage européen depuis Homère*, Paris, 2017.

the period concerned by the *LexArt* project. The articles were written using the citations collected in the database ([www.lexart.fr](http://www.lexart.fr)). These citations are always cited with the precise references of the book, and were sometimes transcribed. The *apparatus criticus* was completed by the translations used at the time, the terms associated or linked to the notion, a list of the sources cited and an indicative bibliography for the notion.

Based on citations extracted from a close reading of the sources, the *LexArt* dictionary has the opposite aim of a dictionary taken in the most general sense of the term. And yet, it was in the form of a dictionary that it seemed most appropriate for us to summarise our research, notion by notion, because it makes it possible to bring together a wide variety of concepts that it was important to study as separate entities. Taken together, they nevertheless form a coherent whole, and provide a very clear vision of the conception of painting formulated by the painters and theorists of the 17th and 18th centuries.

The function and cultural input of these ancient dictionaries, contemporary to our source texts, has already been studied.<sup>1</sup> And the constitution and readership of those dedicated more specifically to art have been explored by Cecilia Hurley, Pascal Griener<sup>2</sup> and Gaëtane Maes.<sup>3</sup> These dictionaries made it possible to better identify the material of our research. Without going into detail, this allowed us to reflect on the very nature of these books, and on how they have been used over the centuries. All this effectively guided our conception of this book.

Our project is situated somewhere between a dictionary and a lexicon, and was constructed around the study of words. These same words were our gateway into the writings on art. However, we had no interest in creating a catalogue of words, nor a lexicon, nor even a

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1. Bernard QUEMADA, *Le dictionnaire de l'Académie française et la lexicographie institutionnelle européenne*, Paris, 1998; Manfred HÖFLER, *La lexicographie française du XVI<sup>e</sup> au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Wolfenbüttel, 1982; Alain REY, *Le lexique: images et modèles. Du dictionnaire à la lexicologie*, Paris, 1977.

2. Cecilia HURLEY, Pascal GRIENER, "Une norme en transformation. La systématique du vocabulaire artistique au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle", dans T.W. GAEHTGENS, C. MICHEL, D. RABREAU, M. SCHIEDER (dir.), *L'art et les normes sociales au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, 2001, p. 3–14.

3. Gaëtane MAES, "Les dictionnaires des Beaux-Arts au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle: pour qui et pourquoi?", dans J.L. FRIPP, A. GORSE, N. MANCEAU, N. STRUCKMEYER (ed.), *Artistes, savants et amateurs: art et sociabilité au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle (1715–1815)*, Paris, 2016, p. 171–184.

glossary. Rather, from the analysis of what lies behind the words, and what was revealed in the texts, our aim was to highlight their meanings, and their connections in a single language or in different languages. Obviously, the appearance of different terms, their use in a variety of linguistic fields, genuinely corresponds to the creation of a modern artistic lexicography that seeks to define as precisely as possible the content of each notion, resituated in its particular context of use. But the many bilingual, trilingual or multilingual dictionaries published from the early 16th century on did not take into account this plasticity in the terms of art.<sup>1</sup> Studying the translations published at the same time was therefore much more significant for our study. These translations revealed the adaptations and distortions in the meanings. It is thus significant for example that *peintre* was translated in England as *artist*, whereas this term (*artiste*) was not used in France, or that *goût* was translated into Dutch with two different terms, *aart* and *smak*. There are a great many examples, and they are often surprising.

Generally speaking, the great dictionaries published in the 17th century were unsuitable for our purposes. Either they were too general, or they continued to diffuse knowledge and conceptions that were out of synch with the content of the artistic literature, thus clearly demonstrating the long time periods needed to assimilate new notions and concepts. This was the case for the major dictionaries of the arts and sciences published in France, Germany or England. Concepts of art theory were rare and only slightly developed.<sup>2</sup> The term *art* for example was mostly understood in the sense of science.

All over Europe, the major dictionaries in French, German and English showed just how difficult it was for the specific art vocabulary, and more particularly painting, to be absorbed into the common

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1. For example, *Colloquia et dictionariorum octo linguarum* published in Amsterdam and Delft in 1613, then in 1623 (Amsterdam, Leyden), 1624 (Amsterdam), 1627 (Venice), 1630 (Antwerp) then many other editions. For an exhaustive bibliography of the multilingual dictionaries published between 1600 and 1700, see William Jervis JONES, *German Lexicography in the European Context. A descriptive bibliography of printed dictionaries and world lists containing German languages (1600–1700)*, Berlin-New-York, 2000; Yves CHEVREL, Annie COINTRE, Yen-Mai TRAN-GERVAT, *Histoire des traductions en langue française (1610–1815)*, Paris, 2014.

2. Thomas CORNEILLE, *Dictionnaire des arts et des sciences*, Paris, 1694–1695; John HARRIS, *Lexicon Technicum, or an Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, London, 1704; Ephraim CHAMBERS, *Cyclopaedia: or, An Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, London, 1728; Johann Heinrich ZEDLER, *Grosses vollständiges Universal-Lexicon aller Wissenschaften und Künste*, Leipzig, 1732–1754.

language.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the language of literature or music was very widely included in artistic literature, and terms such as *agreement*, *arrangement*, and *harmony* were widely used to describe the manners of painting. They were not, however, the subject of real definitions, but much more an explanation often based on precise examples, thus establishing equivalencies between the terms and the object, or the painter's methods, they tried to put into words.

The first dictionaries dedicated to art, Baldinucci's *Vocabolario toscano dell'arte del disegno*<sup>2</sup> for Italy, and above all Félibien's *les Principes de l'architecture, de la sculpture, de la peinture*<sup>3</sup> focused more on techniques. It was nonetheless obvious that Félibien's *Principes* in particular competed to assemble, and then diffuse, the notions that were widely debated in art theory, and thus playing a part in providing art lovers with easier access to works. This was also how glossaries were presented, particularly that of Roger De Piles, which accompanied his translation of Dufresnoy's *De Arte graphica* (1668), and which, over the course of the re-editions, was the subject of major additions. But the articles remained very succinct. The first real dictionaries devoted to art were published in the middle of the 18th century. In 1746, François-Marie Marsy published, in two volumes, his *Dictionnaire abrégé de peinture et d'architecture où l'on trouvera les principaux termes de ces deux arts avec leur explication*.<sup>4</sup> It was based essentially on the writings of Dufresnoy, whose poem, *Arte graphica* (1668) he also translated, and those of De Piles. Pernetty adopted the model of

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1. Antoine FURETIÈRE, *Le Dictionnaire universel*, The Hague, 1690; *Le Grand dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, Paris, 1694–1695; Pierre BAYLE, *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, 3<sup>e</sup> édition, Rotterdam, 1720; Louis MORÉRI, *Le Grand Dictionnaire historique, ou le Mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane*, Paris, 1st ed. 1674; Johann Heinrich ZEDLER, *Grosses vollständiges Universal-Lexicon aller Wissenschaften und Künste*, Leipzig, 1732–1754.

2. Filippo BALDINUCCI, *Vocabolario toscano dell'arte del disegno: nel quale si esplicano i propri termini e voci, non solo della pittura, scultura, [et] architettura; ma ancora di altre arti a quelle subordinate, e che abbiano per fondamento il disegno . . .*, Florence, 1681.

3. André FÉLIBIEN, *Des principes de l'architecture, de la sculpture, de la peinture, et des autres arts qui en dépendent. Avec un dictionnaire des Termes propres à chacun de ces Arts*, Paris, 1676.

4. François-Marie MARSY, abbé de, *Dictionnaire abrégé de peinture et d'architecture où l'on trouvera les principaux termes de ces deux arts avec leur explication, la vie abrégée des grands peintres & des architectes célèbres, & une description succincte des plus beaux ouvrages de peinture, d'architecture & de sculpture, soit antiques, soit modernes*, Paris, 1746, 2 tomes.

this new type of dictionary,<sup>1</sup> as did Lacombe.<sup>2</sup> And their works were the first to be devoted to the terms of art and their specificities, while also adding biographies of artists and historical notions to the articles more specifically devoted to painting.

These texts corresponded to well-defined sociability circle, and were aimed at different publics.<sup>3</sup> But it is nevertheless possible to wonder to what extent all these tools, including the first forms of lexicon, as well as all the artistic literature with more or less significant inflections depending on the country, had as their aim, often even clearly admitted, to explain painting and train the eyes and judgment of spectators. In the preface to his *Dictionnaire portatif* (1757), Antoine-Joseph Pernety presented his project, and gave the advantages that he saw in the publication, while defending himself against “the bad humour of certain people, who made them cry out against the century’s taste for Dictionaries” (*la mauvaise humeur de certaines gens, qui les fait crier contre le goût du siècle pour les Dictionnaires*).<sup>4</sup> After this precautionary oration, he cited the different advantages of this type of publication. He wanted to diffuse, to as wide a public as possible, and including for those who were ignorant, the artistic vocabulary that he also esteemed to be essential: “How can we converse with Artists effectively, and reason with them about their Art, if we are unfamiliar with the terms that are specific to them, or if we do not know the real meaning in which they use them?” (*Comment en effet converser avec les Artistes, & raisonner avec eux sur leur Art, si l’on ignore les termes qui leur sont propres, ou si l’on n’est pas au fait du vrai sens dans lequel on les emploie?*).<sup>5</sup> This preoccupation was already that of Poussin, who sent letters to his patrons to explain to them his manner of conceiving of painting.<sup>6</sup> The difference that it is nevertheless necessary to underline was that the aim of Pernety was to diffuse this language as widely as possible.

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1. Antoine-Joseph PERNETY, *Dictionnaire portatif de peinture, sculpture et gravure*, Paris, 1757; reprint Geneva, 1972; trad. all. Berlin, 1764.

2. Jacques LACOMBE, *Dictionnaire portatif des Beaux-Arts*, Paris, 1752.

3. Gaëtane MAES, 2016, p. 171–184; Cecilia HURLEY, Pascal GRIENER, 2001, p. 3–14.

4. Antoine-Joseph PERNETY, 1757, p. iii.

5. Antoine-Joseph PERNETY, 1757, p. iii.

6. Nicolas POUSSIN, *Lettres et propos sur l’art*, textes réunis et présentés par A. BLUNT, Paris, 1964; reed. avec préface de J. THUILLIER, 1994; Georg GERMANN, “Les dictionnaires de Félibien et Baldinucci”, *Revue d’esthétique*, 1997, no. 31/32, p. 253–258.

Dictionaries have been published in recent decades by art historians. Focusing on the Italian Renaissance and the second half of the 18th century, most paid little interest to the geographical space and the time period that interest us. Some focus essentially on techniques,<sup>1</sup> others are more specifically oriented towards aesthetics<sup>2</sup> and art criticism;<sup>3</sup> finally, there are others that include as field of study the major categories and methods of art history.<sup>4</sup> The ambitions of the LexArt dictionary are different. We covered a less broad period, and a specific and more limited geographical area, and thus excluded Italy (except for the translations of Da Vinci and Lomazzo published during our period). Obviously, when necessary, we retraced the foundations of a notion, just as art theory after 1750 was not taken into account except as a means of showing, in certain very specific cases, the prolongations.

We were attached to a synchronous approach to the discourse and artistic practice that this period covered. The term was thus integrated into networks that made it possible to reveal the equivalence of terms that do not have the same meaning, or on the contrary the links and ruptures. The different entries and occurrences in the various languages are not provided in their current translation, nor with their contemporary meaning, but are taken from the different ancient translations in order to give the most objective and critical overview of knowledge possible according to the sources. The purpose is not to provide definitions, nor to propose translations, but rather to highlight what was at stake in the usages, resituated in different contexts in time and space, by confronting different manners of thinking, painting and looking. About for example, the notion of *convenance* and its synonyms, *bien-séance*, *decorum*, *Wohlstand*, *welstand*, *decency*, *harmony* or *propriety*, it was important for us to first of all show how the four semantic fields are connected: conformity with history, adaptation to place, internal harmony, and fidelity to custom. It was also important to

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1. Jean-Philippe BREUILLE, *L'Atelier du peintre et l'art de peinture. Dictionnaire des termes techniques*, Paris, Larousse, 1990; Ségolène BERGEON, Pierre CURIE, *Peinture & dessin: vocabulaire typologique et technique*, Paris, 2009; Dawson W CARR, Mark LEONARD, *Looking at Paintings. A Guide to Technical Terms*, Malibu, 1992.

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3. Luigi GRASSI, Mario PEPE, *Dizionario della Critica d'arte*, Turin, 1998, 2 t.

4. Karlheinz BARCK (dir.), *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe (ÄGB). Historisches Wörterbuch in sieben Bänden*, Stuttgart, 2000–2010, 7 vol.; Ulrich PFISTERER, *Metzler Lexikon. Kunstwissenschaft. Ideen, Methoden, Begriffe*, Stuttgart/Weimar, 2003.

show why decency, initially associated with the balance of bodies, was subsequently extended, through permeability with Dutch conception, to the sense of visual harmony, and then evolved until the middle of the 18th century.

The decision to write long articles thus became obvious, as it allowed us to better respond to this aim. We thus discussed the approximately 250 notions into 77 articles, as the best way to connect the issues that arose in the course of our research. For example, we grouped together *amateur*, *connaisseur* and *curieux* in a single article, as we also did for *copie* and *original*. On the other hand, certain notions have been split between several different articles, so that we talk about *amitié* or *entente* in the essays on *harmonie des couleurs* and *union*; or *assemblage* on the subject of *union* and *groupe*. The association of different terms as various aspects of a notion, are finally much closer to the still moving usage of the terms whose meaning had not yet been fixed with precision. An index makes it possible to move easily around all the articles. Translations (English, German, Dutch, Italian and Latin) and the different meanings given to a single term (*académie/école et académie/dessin*), as well as the precise references to the citations obtained in most cases from the database [www.lexart.fr](http://www.lexart.fr), complete the *apparatus criticus*.

The articles respond to each other and form a whole that is not just a collection of definitions, but highlights a new approach to painting. Behind the alphabetical order that is specific to this type of exercise, a framework is defined that traces the outlines of a new reading of paintings.

## 2 The Eyes of the Painter and the Eyes of the Spectator

Indeed, if words are like brushstrokes, which form in the mind the images of the things without which it is impossible to know them, there is nothing in the arts so important to speak well of them, and if necessary to judge all sorts of works, as knowing what each word means.

*En effet si les paroles sont autant de coups de pinceau, qui forment dans l'esprit les images des choses sans quoy il est impossible de les faire connoistre, il n'y a rien dans les arts de si important pour en bien parler, & de si*

*nécessaire pour juger de toutes sortes d'ouvrages, comme de sçavoir ce que chaque mot signifie*<sup>1</sup>.

This phrase by Félibien provides the full justification for our project. Just as one recognises in words the ability to create an image in a poem, they also have the ability to evoke the act of painting and the work itself. They also have the capacity to go beyond descriptions to speak of their essence, their nature and their reception in terms of sensations, in short, to speak of the experience of both the painter and the spectator. Through artistic literature, it is the work of the painter and the gaze of the spectator that are described to us like a watermark.<sup>2</sup> The texts on art theory provide us with the context in which the eyes that created the work, and those that regarded it, had been educated. They explain the know-how, models, and usages that brought precision to the conventions of representation. Defining these models made it possible to make an interpretation as close as possible to the intellectual, social and visual contexts in which the painting was produced. The words that described proportion, perspective and composition, were in perfect harmony with the object that they described.

The *LexArt* dictionary highlights two characteristics that are essential for understanding the art of the period envisaged. The first has already been revealed by the research on art theory in recent decades (in particular based on analyses of Hoogstraten and Sandrart and on French theory around De Piles), and was comforted by our research. It touches on the relationship between theory and practice. The theory of art North of the Alps was not an abstract conception focused on the Idea, but rather an explanation of practice. The second characteristic, which became evident in the course of the studies carried out in the context of the *LexArt* project, was the importance given to effect. In many of the texts written by art theorists, who were often artists, this notion was central and included in a double movement: the creative work of the painter, which was simultaneously the support for the gaze that the spectator will pose on the work.

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1. André FÉLIBIEN, *Des principes de l'architecture, de la sculpture, de la peinture, et des autres arts qui en dépendent. Avec un dictionnaire des Termes propres à chacun de ces Arts*, Paris, 1676, préface n.p.

2. Élisabeth LAVEZZI, "Le peintre dans les dictionnaires des beaux-arts de Félibien, Marsy, Lacombe et Pernetty", *Diffusion du savoir et affrontement des idées, 1600–1770*, Montbrison, 1993, p. 383-392.



The eyes—the gaze—thus became a key element in the discourse on art. For these theorists, it was not a question of elaborating reflection on the relationship between visual perception through the theories of vision that were then being developed, nor for us to approach this question in the sense of a psychology of perception as it was presented by Gombrich.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, our focus lay on the subtle internal processes that allowed a figurative representation to spring forth from the brushstroke, revealing to us how the painter saw, and how he invented by describing the passage from mental images to representation, how he transposed them on to the canvas, and brought them to life, thanks to the disposition, colours, light and movement. Thus, behind the formal, visual aspects, and behind the expression of what makes it possible to update them, the painter's eye appeared. The notion of effect as it was described by art theorists played a fundamental role, as it was situated at the meeting point between the gaze of the painter and that of the spectator: the former who conceived and painted in relation to the effect, and the latter who perceived the effect and received it.

As the art theory of the time described the different manners, rather than conceptions, it clearly revealed the possibility of renewing the way one looked at a painting. The terms used by painters did not only contribute to transposing their jargon into the everyday language as a means of explaining their art. More than the definitions, it is the descriptions of notions which make up the body of art theory that shape the spectator's gaze. What does he see? What kind of visual experience does the painter elicit by describing the treatment of colour or light? Is the gaze captured by the idea or the history? Or by the forms? Approaching a painting through perception and recognition, or through aesthetic pleasure, is a question that was asked by Jean-Pierre Changeux.<sup>2</sup> It is very present in theoretical texts, and reveals an essential change in the conception of art. There are two approaches to paintings that clearly stand out. The first is evident in the writings of many theorists. It corresponds to the perception of forms and figures organised according to a certain rhythm, which leads to an understanding of painting through its order and which, without excluding the multiplicity of meanings (or episodes), is created

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1. Ernst GOMBRICH, *L'art et l'illusion: psychologie de la représentation picturale*, Paris, 2002 (1st ed. angl. 1960).

2. Jean-Pierre CHANGEUX, *Raison et plaisir*, Paris, 1994, p. 38–39.

from the different parts of the history represented. But a second form of perception also developed: that of the painting through the effects of colour and light. The exploration of a painting through its parts, in accordance with the order of the history, taking into account composition and meaning, was thus opposed to an approach to the whole which captured the spectator's attention in one sudden instant.

Painting or looking at a painting in parts or as a whole has always been a key issue for the painter. What Jean-Pierre Changeux called the harmony of the senses and reason,<sup>1</sup> or what we might call the eye of reason, was thus opposed to the sensitive eye which gradually started to dominate in the writings. This shift is perceptible in the description of notions such as composition, or the relationship between drawing and colour. A real inversion took place. The eye that regarded the whole on the basis of the parts was opposed to a vision of the whole, the *tout-ensemble* for French theorists, which soon found equivalents in other countries. Although the definition of aesthetic sentiment was not yet clearly formulated, it was being prepared in the importance given by theorists to agreement, pleasure and to a certain conception of grace.

“Talking about painting” did not merely introduce the spectator into the artist's studio, showing him “how to paint”. It also introduced him into the painting itself, showing him what it was important to see, and how to see it. As they took into account the practice of painting, or took as their basis the analysis of works, and were also conceived as an education of the spectator's eye, the art literature, could be considered as a source for awakening a new way of looking which included the painter's intention (*intento*) far from defining a theory. As proposed by Sandrart, explaining his aim when writing the *Teutsche Academie*: “It is for this reason [to attain the *intent*, the intention and the aim of the painter] that one must allow the paintings to descend gently into the soul and reason. The present work expects the same politeness of the noble reader” (*C'est pour cette raison [pour atteindre l'intento, l'intention et le dessein du peintre] que l'on doit laisser descendre les tableaux doucement dans l'âme et dans la raison. Le présent livre attend la même politesse du noble lecteur*).<sup>2</sup> These writings formed the eyes to better see and played a part in shaping the “period eye”, as it was

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1. *Ibidem*, p. 46.

2. [Darum soll man die Gemälde in das Gemüte und den Verstand langsam hinablassen. Dergleichen Höflichkeit erwartet auch gegenwärtiges Buch von dem edlen Leser], Joachim VON SANDRART, *Teustsche Academie*, 1675, p. 103.

defined by Baxandall.<sup>1</sup> By revealing the mental, intellectual and visual universe that made it possible to better understand a work of art, they were essential for penetrating the artistic productions of this period with a synchronous *apparatus criticus*.

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1. Michael BAXANDALL, *L'Œil du Quattrocento: l'usage de la peinture dans l'Italie de la Renaissance*, Paris, 1985 (1st ed. angl. 1972); Michael BAXANDALL, *Words for picture: seven papers on Renaissance art and art criticism*, Yale, 2003; Peter MACK, Williams ROBERT, *Michael Baxandall, vision and the work of words*, Farnham Burlington, 2015.

# A

## ACADEMY

fr.: *académie*

germ.: *Akademie* — *Akademie-Bild*

nl.: *academy-beeld* — *academyteykenen* — *academie*

it.: *accademia*

lat.: *academia*

### **School, rule, drawing, naked, live model**

*Term designating on the one hand an artistic practice and its result: drawing a naked figure and the sheet on which the model was represented; and on the other a reunion of people sharing a common centre of interest: the elevation of art and its teaching. Both meanings were intimately related as the practice of an academy took place in a venue referred to as a school or academy of drawing.*

### The Academy as an Artistic Practice: Representing Man in Action

An Academy is a figure drawn in conformity with the Model, who is a man that the painters pay for his services by painting him naked, and that they made [to] Act, that is, put into a position, from which the aforementioned model must not move without first warning the students who were drawing in the Academy, from which their figures took their name.

*Une Académie, c'est une figure dessinée conformément au Modèle qui est un homme que les peintres payent pour les servir en le dépouillant tout nu, & qu'ils mettent [en] Acte, c'est-à-dire en posture, où ledit modèle ne doit bouger sans en avertir les écoliers qui dessinent dans l'Académie, d'où leurs figures tirent leur nom.*

When Hilaire Pader gave the definition of the word “academy” (*Peinture parlante*, 1657, n.p.), he described the exercise of drawing from a live model that needed to be paid, explaining that this practice was thus called because it took place in an academy, understood in the sense of school. This definition corresponded to what we know of the experience of the painter who, with two other artists, had created an “academy of the art of painting and sculpture” in 1641 in Toulouse, in which drawing from live models was taught to “pupils”. Pader was hoping to reproduce what he had experienced in Italy, where this activity had developed in the second half of the 16th century. N. Pevsner situated the association of the word “academy” with the practice of drawing from nature at the start of the *Seicento* in the academy of the Carracchi in Bologna. Several drawings attest this practice which used a male model because it was forbidden for women to pose unless there was an exception. The issue of introducing the study of nudes using a live model was linked to the need to represent life and expressions which made it possible to demonstrate the painter’s virtuosity. Until then, observation of anatomy was made on the basis of antiquity and consisted essentially in correctly mastering proportions. For Hoogstraten (1678), the main advantage of the live model was to be able to show the movement and action (*doening*) of the figures (Blanc, 2006, p. 88–91). Sandrart, in the *Teutsche Academie*, spoke of academic practice (*Academische Übung*) and the utility of studying the largest number of positions (1679, t. 2, p. 12). The variety of positions thus broke with the more rigid and repetitive ancient models that were produced in studios from statues or engravings. It thus also allowed the painter to avoid falling into a routine, mechanically drawing from memory even in the presence of a model (Watelet, Lévesque, 1788, p. 2). It was nevertheless necessary for the model to be of good constitution, not too thin, and well-proportioned (Lairesse, 1701, p. 76–77). Studies from live models were integrated into pedagogical programmes as being the final stage in a painter’s training, coming after copying and drawing from memory (Félibien, *4<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, in particular the *Conseils pour apprendre à dessiner pour une personne qui ne peut suivre les*

*cours de l'Académie royale ni les conférences*; words repeated by Dupuy du Grez, 1699). Antoine Leblond de Latour (1669, p. 27–27) insisted on the difference between drawing from an engraving or a drawing, and from a naked man, when dealing with the outlines and rendering of the flesh. In addition, the latter exercise required that the pupil show evidence of rapidity when capturing the traits of a model who may not maintain the pose for a long time.

Through metonymy, the practice of drawing a nude model gave its name to a type of drawing, called “academy”, of which a large number of sheets have been preserved. Dezallier d’Argenville (1745, I, p. XVII–XVIII) classified them among the five kinds of drawing, with thoughts, line drawings, studies and cartoons. Marsy (1746, p. 3–5) assimilated drawing from the nude with the “study”.

#### The Academy as a Social Practice: Elevation of the Status of Painting

This practice occurred in specific places such as a studio, a private palace or an institution, also referred to as an academy. Although the term “academy” was not the subject of an entry in the dictionary that Félibien published in his *Principes de l’Architecture, de la Sculpture et la Peinture* (1676), the distinction between the artistic practice and the place was clearly marked in the middle of the 18th century in the dictionaries of de Marsy (which returned in part to that of Félibien) and Pernety who had an entry for “Academies” in the plural, designating “figures that are ordinarily nude, drawn from nature” (*des figures ordinairement nues faites d’après nature*) and another entry, “Academy” in the singular, essentially devoted to the most famous of these academies, the Académie royale de peinture et d’architecture in Paris.

The origin of the word comes from the Greek *Akadèmeia* or *Ekadèmeia*, which designated a vast garden in Athens where Plato lived. It was brought back into favour in Italy (*accademia*) by the humanists of the Renaissance. Soon, these academies, which were initially informal, became progressively institutionalised and developed throughout Europe, such as the *Accademia del Disegno* founded by Cosimo de’Medicis on the initiative of Vasari in Florence (1563), the *Accademia di San Luca* (1577) in Rome, presided by Federico Zuccaro (in 1593), the *Académie Royale de peinture et de sculpture* in Paris (1648), which was followed by provincial academies (late 17th and 18th centuries), the *Akademie der Bildenden Künste* in Berlin (1692) or the Royal Academy

of Art in London (1768). Often approached from a historical point of view, the evolution in academies was linked to that of the status of painters. When Henri Testelin (*Sentiments*, 1693 or 1694, n.p.) spoke of the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, of which he was a member, he insisted on the importance of its creation in 1648 for painters. Until then, the latter were effectively attached to mastery, which was considered to be a “society mechanic” (*mécanique société*). Testelin thus stressed that the issue for painters was to detach and distinguish themselves from craftsmen. The Academy allowed artists to be able to practise their art “freely and nobly” (*librement & noblement*), and to attach the “beautiful arts” (*beaux arts*) (painting and sculpture) to the liberal arts. This idea, which had already been defended by Da Vinci, was one of the constants in the writings on art. But it was not the only aim. In his *Accademia del Disegno*, Vasari hoped to both bring together the best artists, and train beginners. De Piles (1708, p. 399–400) designed the royal institution as a place open to pupils who already had a good level of drawing so as to be able to maintain a high level of excellence, particularly through the exchanges and debates on art that took place there, and of which the aim was to establish a doctrine, and to establish the rules making it possible to distinguish good from bad painting. The “real painting” (*veritable peinture*) was the painting produced by the painters of the Academy (Fréart de Chambray 1662 repeated by Restout 1681, p. 14). The practice of drawing within an academy procured the emulation of the artists who worked there in a group (Sandrart, 1675, p. 61). Beyond the pedagogical function, an academy played both a social and a political role. Through the recruitment of its members, it guaranteed a breeding ground for talented artists in the service of the prince, who protected them. Through the teachings that it provided, it played a role in informing amateurs (Félibien, 1668–1688, Richardson, 1719, p. 56–57). However, academic training was contested in the second half of the 18th century because of its rules—which were seen as being strict and thus hindering the expression of the artist’s genius. The rupture came in the 19th century with the affirmation of a negative connotation for the concept of academism.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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De Piles, 1708; Dezallier D'Argenville, 1745–1752; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Félibien, 1666–1688; Marsy, 1746; Pader, 1653 [1657]; Pernety, 1757; Restout, 1681; Richardson, 1719; Sandrart, 1675, 1679; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1791.

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Accident ⇒ *Chiaroscuro*  
 Action ⇒ Attitude, History  
 Addition ⇒ Ornament

## AGREEABLENESS

fr.: *agrément*  
 germ.: *Annehmlichkeit, Zierlichkeit*  
 nl.: *aangenaamheid, bevalligheid*  
 it.: *venustà*  
 lat.: *venustas*



### Grace, charm, pleasure, agreement, elegance, ornament

The term agreeableness (*agrément*) is often considered to be synonymous with that of grace (Pernety, 1757). Agreeable was more widely used in reference to the subject on the one hand, and colouring on the other. Agreeable colouring was colouring that was shining: brilliance thus appeared to be an essential aspect of agreeableness. Although in the translations of French theoretical texts into Dutch, German or English the terms *aangenaamheid*, *bevalligheid*, *Annehmlichkeit*, grace, charm or agreeableness were the most common, confirming the semantic reconciliation of the two concepts, their assimilation was nevertheless more subtle in the French language, to the extent that Watelet did not propose an entry for the term *agrément*. In his article on *Agréable*, he recognised the lack of precision in the meaning in everyday language, and observed that this vague idea was not advantageous for painting. The essential merit of agreeable works was that they offered real and true pleasure. He thus came out against the principle of assimilating agreeable with fancies, caprice, affected paintings, all of which characterised taste alterations, and exhorted artists to reject artifice and find perfection in nature.

### Agreeableness and Grace

Junius proposed as a synonym for *aanghenaamheyd* the term convenience (*welstandigheyd*), which he defined as *gratie* and *bevalligheydt*; both terms were translated as “grace” in the English edition (1641, p. 315–316). With this term he defined the harmony of perfection that formed the main parts of a work, that is, the spirit of invention, the precision of the proportions, the good use of colour, the life of the movements, and the order in the composition. In France, the concept of agreeableness took another direction. In the *Idée de la perfection de la peinture* (1662), Fréart de Chambray adapted the parts of a painting described by Junius, but did only retain convenience as the qualifier. Other authors associated agreeableness with elegance and grace. Dupuy du Grez defined it thus in a composition as “an elegant assembly of several parts that form a whole” (*un assemblage élégant de plusieurs parties qui font un tout*, 1699, p. 284–285).

But the term appeared above all in a much more frequent manner in two specific contexts: on the one hand, that of figures, and, on the other, that of colour. It was first of all associated with the attitudes and airs of the heads by Félibien (1688, 9<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 6–7), or used in relation to action (De Piles, 1708, p. 100–101). It was also applied

to proportions and their beauty (Sandrart, 1675, p. 67, 1679, p. 14, or Goeree, 1682, p. 34–35) and their correspondence (Browne, 1675, p. 4–5, taken up by Smith, 1692, p. 26–27). The new inflections given to the notion of colouring at the end of the 17th and 18th centuries then gave the term yet another new direction, reinforcing a reconciliation with the concepts of grace and elegance. Although Félibien considered that the agreeableness of a painting was the result of the action of the colour, supported by the drawing, and that elegance came from the joint effects of the drawing and colouring (Félibien, 1688, *10<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 289–290), the concept of agreeableness was then attributed exclusively to the harmony and grace of the colours (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 284–285, p. 292–293). Using the works of Titian as an example, Dolce had already outlined the concept of elegance and grace in colours, that is, the gravity, *morbidezza*, tenderness or natural conduction of light (Dolce/ Vleughels, 1735, p. 283), and, referring to the Greek term, *charis*, he used the word *venustà* which Vleughels translated by *agrément*, thus revealing the full ambiguity of the term (1735, p. 265). Similarly, Richardson only applied this term to colour, and reconciled “agreement” with the harmony, beauty and goodness of the colouring, without excluding either the diversity or contrasts (1725, p. 156–15; 1719, p. 88–90).

### To Please and Make Pleasant

The *Dictionnaire de l'Académie* (1694) proposed two meanings for the term: the quality by which one pleases, and pleasure. These two meanings were also found in the writings on art, which described the workings of pleasure. The first incidence in artistic literature in France seems to be that of La Mothe Le Vayer (1648, *Lettre IX*, p. 110) who, using the example of Raphael (1483–1520), defined agreeableness on the basis of what was natural. This assertion remained valid, and Batteux considered that imitation was the source of it: “It is this that gives agreeableness in the Arts, to objects that were disagreeable in Nature” (*C'est ce qui revêt d'agrément dans les Arts les objets qui étoient désagréables dans la Nature*, 1746, p. 93–94). But more broadly speaking, between grace and elegance, agreeableness is what pleases, what charms, “a *je-ne-sais-quoi* that fills the spirit with infinite pleasure, although it is not possible to discover from which side comes that which pleases us so” (*un je ne sais quoi qui remplit les esprits d'un plaisir infini, quoiqu'on ne puisse découvrir de quel côté vient, ce qui nous plait si fort,*

Dolce/Vleughels, 1735, p. 261–263). The effect on the spectator was thus also considered to be a constitutional element of this concept: that which is agreeable (*aangenaam*) is that which charms the eye; for Lairese (1712, I, p. 418), that which is agreeable is that which is pleasing. De Piles proposed the expression a “seasoning to the taste of everyone” (*assaisonnement au goût de tous*, 1708, p. 159–160). Perhaps this term described in a figurative manner the double meaning of the term *agreement*, which expressed on the one hand the quality by means of which one pleases (*Dictionnaire de l’Académie française*, 1694), and, on the other, ornament (*Dictionnaire* by Furetière, 1690). The latter meaning was also frequent in art theory. De Piles (1708, p. 231–232) thus returned to the idea proposed by Sandrart, in which trees were the agreeable or pleasing ornament that made a landscape beautiful (Sandrart, 1675, p. 71). Richardson (1725, p. 110–111) highlighted the pleasant effect of ornaments in the Marie de’Medicis cycle by Rubens (1577–1640). The same duality was also found in the German language in the concept of agreeableness and ornament, in the terms *Zier*, *Zierde*, *zierlich*, *Zierlichkeit*. They did not simply express the idea of decoration, but also that which must be pleasant to the eye and taste.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Batteux, 1746; Browne, 1669 [1675]; De Lairese, 1712; De Piles, 1708; *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française*, 1694; Dolce/Vleughels, 1557 [1735]; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Félibien, 1666–1688; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Furetière, 1690; Goeree, 1682; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648; Pernety, 1757; Richardson, 1715 [1725], 1719; Sandrart, 1675, 1679; Smith, 1692; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1791.

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## AGREEMENT

fr.: *accord*  
 germ.: *Einstimmung*  
 nl.: *harmonie, ghevoeghelickeyd, medevoeghlickeyd, overeenstemming*  
 it.: *accordo*  
 lat.: *concordia*

### Friendship, consent, economy, harmony, sympathy, union

*Initially theorised as part of the reflection on drawing, the concept of agreement progressively took shape as one of the key elements in colourist terminology. It affirmed the primacy of all parts, underlining the important, not to say essential, role of the effects of the work on the viewer.*

The notion of agreement covers two different meanings. The first concerns drawing. It is a question of reflecting on the relationship that compositions or figures in their entirety entertain with their parts (Dolce/Vleughels, 1735, p. 193–195; Junius, 1641, p. 247–248; De Piles, 1668, p. 12). This quality was assimilated with those of “convenience”, “congruity”, “equality” and “proportion” (Junius, 1641, p. 248; Browne, 1675, p. 4–5; Smith, 1692, p. 26–27), until it was correlated to the rules of the lost *Canon* of Polykleitos (Junius, 1641, p. 248). The second meaning concerns colouring. On the basis of the principle that colouring is not simply the sum of the colours, theoreticians—and above all colourists—observed that it was possible, using agreement in drawing as the model, to link the colours of a given work in ratios of proportion (Dolce/Vleughels, 1735, p. 223–225).

The agreement of colours nevertheless obeys its own rules. Taking the models of Paul Veronese and Peter Paul Rubens as their basis, Franciscus Junius and Roger de Piles were the first to stress that the agreement of colours is only made possible by sacrificing the precision of the parts to the beauty of the whole (Junius, 1641, p. 248; De Piles, 1677, p. 297). There is nevertheless no exact recipe for successfully achieving this chromatic agreement. Only assiduous practice (Boutet, 1696, p. 44; Dezallier d’Argenville, 1745–1755, *Avertissement*, p. III), combined with perfect knowledge of the masters—what Gerard de Lairese referred to as “poetry” (1712, t. I, p. 115–116)—and nature

(De Piles, 1677, p. 293–294; Richardson, 1725, p. 156–157), can teach this art, which theoreticians willingly compare to the organic functioning of machines. The term used by Junius to describe the agreement in the tints used in a painting, *maeksel* (1641, p. 248), comes from the verb *maken* (“to make”), and refers to the term “factory”, as well as, more broadly speaking, that of “machine”. From the commentary by Charles-Alphonse Dufresnoy in Roger de Piles’ *De arte graphica*, the term “machine” designates the relationships of interdependence between the parts and the whole in a composition (1668, p. 77; 1677, p. 297–298).

If art theoreticians insist so heavily on the importance of the agreement of colours, it is because in their opinion, it occupies an essential place in the effect that a work produces—or not—on the viewer. Roger de Piles was the first to use a political metaphor to qualify the relationships of “sympathy” between the colours of a work. When successful, these relationships make it possible to win the approval of the viewers, by catching their attention (1668, p. 127–131; 1677, p. 291–293). This theory was taken up by other French authors (Boutet, 1696, p. 52; La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747, p. 47), and translates in an original manner the idea by which chromatic agreement is the means for a work to make itself desirable. By organising variety in tints, it allows the viewer’s gaze to revel in “pleasant fantasies of abundance” (Van Mander, 1604, *Grondt*, V, 25–26, fol. 17r<sup>o</sup>), as well as to understand the subject of a work from a single glance (Sanderson, 1658, p. 50–51). The agreement of colours is often compared to grace (Félibien, 1661, p. 36–37), thus participating in genuine erotisation of artistic perception. It is through “mixtures” (*vermenghingen*) of tints that the “eyes” of the viewers can be “charmed” (*bekoren*) and thus, their “fantasy” (*fantasijen*) (their sensitive imagination) can become “excited” (Junius, 1641, p. 297). This is a “charm” that Gerard de Lairese described as real “enchantment” (De Lairese, 1712, t. I, p. 207), whilst in French, Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d’Argenville used the word “magic” (*magie*) (1745–1755, t. I, p. xxxvi).

It is true that the effect that the agreement of colours in a work produces on viewers is not limited to a set of visual *stimuli*. On the contrary, it participates in a synaesthetic conception of artistic perception. The musical metaphor thus runs through all artistic literature focusing on this concept. To qualify the second of the five parts of art, Junius speaks indistinctly of “proportion, symmetry, analogy and harmony”. He groups these terms together under the concept

of *ghelijck-maetigheyd*, which literally designates a set of objects and patterns linked by the “same” (*gelijck-*) “measure” (*-maetigheyd*) (1641, p. 203–204, 244). He also mentions the concepts of “convenience” and “harmony” (*de ghevoeghlicheydt deser Harmonie*), which allows him to refer to vocabulary specific respectively to issues of invention and music (1641, p. 248; see also Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 300). These analogies make it possible to raise the question of the agreement or disagreement of colours (De Piles, 1715, p. 51–52; Coypel, 1732, p. 33), as well as the tension between unity and variety. Without abundance, a composition is similar to a monadic song: pure but dull. Without harmony, it becomes a cacophony. It is necessary that “this disagreement (as in music) produces a pleasing agreement”, that is, harmonious polyphony (Sanderson, 1658, p. 50–51). This metaphor, which links the senses together, can also take on other forms, as it is linked to other tastes. This is the case in Samuel van Hoogstraten, who compares works of art to dishes, and the view of the viewer to his consumption: “variety sparks appetite, just as the eye takes pleasure in a number of different things”. To avoid indigestion, it is also important that this “variety does not lead to contradictions” and that it remains “a pleasant harmony” (1678, p. 182).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Boutet, 1672; Browne, 1669 [1675]; Coypel, 1732; De Lairese, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1668, 1677, 1715; Dezallier D’Argenville, 1745–1752; Dolce/Vleughels, 1557 [1735]; Du Fresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Félibien, 1666–1688; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747; Richardson, 1715 [1725]; Sanderson, 1658; Smith, 1692; Van Mander, 1604.

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## AIR/COUNTENANCE

fr.: *air*  
 germ.: *Luft, Ausdrückung*  
 nl.: *lucht, uitdrückkeligheid*  
 it.: *aria, volto*  
 lat.: *aer, vultus*

**Background, ground, perspective, aerial perspective**  
**Expression, physiognomy, air of head, face**

*Designating equally the effects of atmospheric perspective and those that a face can produce on a spectator, the concept of air, similar to that of grace, closely links the beauty of a work of art to the relationship it has with the spectator.*

### The Thickness of Air

The concept of air was initially associated with the issues of atmospheric perspective. Leonardo da Vinci (1651, p. 19, 36), probably using his knowledge of early 15th century Dutch landscapers as his basis, was the first to propose an articulated theory of means, thanks to which painters could create the illusion of depth and distance when representing outdoor scenes, taking into account the thickness of the air that is interposed between the objects and the eye of the spectator: “It is said that there is air in a Painting, when the colour of all the figures is diminished depending on the different degrees of distance; this decrease is called aerial perspective” (*On dit qu’il y a de l’air dans un Tableau, lorsque la couleur de tous les corps est diminuée selon les differens degrez d’éloignement; cette diminution s’appelle la perspective aërienne*, Félibien, 1676, p. 465). The expression “aerial perspective”, which seems to have appeared during the first half of the 17th century (Bosse, 1649, p. 112), and of which Félibien (1679, 5<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 20–26) attributes the invention to Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665), is based on the idea that it is not the colour of objects that changes with distance, but the feeling one has of them when looking at the objects through

the thickness of the air (Bosse, 1667, p. 49). Some, such as Leonardo da Vinci (1651, p. 19–20) or Gerard de Lairese (1712, t. I, p. 16), noted that the air seemed clearer the closer it was to the earth. But painters should not systematise this formal solution, but rather exercise caution. By observing nature they should, like Rembrandt (Félibien, 1685, 7<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 151–152), modify the tones and outlines of the objects, depending on their position in space (Vinci, 1651, p. 93; La Fontaine, 1679, p. 39; Beurs, 1692, p. 55–57). A single colour, such as that of the bark of trees, can effectively seem “blackish” (*noirâtre*) in the “rough air” (*air grossier*) of “low and marshy places” (*lieux bas & marécageux*) and “lighter in more subtle air” (*plus clair dans un air subtil*) (De Piles, 1708, p. 235–236).

### The Air of Head

During the 17th century, French artistic terminology, subsequently adopted by British artistic literature (Aglionby, 1685, “Explanation”), added a second meaning to the word *air*: “It is said that there are good attitudes of the head. Guido Reni gives good attitudes to his Figures. In the works of Raphael, the attitudes of the heads are admirable, that is, the faces” (*L’on dit de beaux airs de teste. Le Guide* [Guido Reni] *donne de beaux airs de teste à ses Figures. Dans les ouvrages de Raphaël les airs de teste y sont admirables, c’est-à-dire les visages*) (Félibien, 1676, p. 464–465). Although Roger de Piles specified that the attitude “included the traits of the face, the hairstyle and the size” (*comprend les traits du visage, la coëffure, & la taille*) (1708, p. 264–165), this notion designated above all the effect that the traits and attitude of a head produced on the spectator. In a composition made up of a large number of figures, it was thus important, in order to not appear dull, that the attitudes of the head be both varied and contrasted (Vinci, 1651, p. 31; Aglionby, 1685, p. 106–107). This was only possible if the painter had perfect knowledge of Antiquity and the Old Masters (Dolce/Vleugels, 1735, p. 157)—which explains that, for Abraham Bosse, the master was Nicolas Poussin (Bosse, 1667, p. 19). These facial attitudes needed to be adapted to the figures and scenes represented (Bosse, 1649, p. 92–93; Pader, 1657, p. 16; Bosse, 1667, p. 34; Du Bos, 1740, p. 258–259), even if it was necessary to favour the grave simplicity of the ancient models over the singular nature of the live model (Bosse, 1667, p. 29; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694, preface]).



## The Question of Beauty

Whether it was a question of landscapes or figures, the concept of air thus presupposed that the artists take into account the effect that their works produced on the spectator. In the first case, the beauty of a landscape came from the way in which the variety of its different tones was unified by the aerial perspective (Vinci, 1651, p. 42; Bosse, 1649, p. 63; Lairese, 1712, t. I, p. 326). In the second case, it was the airs of heads that the spectator looked at first, not only to identify the subject, but also to understand how he was supposed to feel (Bosse, 1649, p. 98–99). The air, in this respect, was a category of grace, as observed by William Sanderson (1658, p. 50–51; Bell, 1730, p. 63–64), who spoke of “the Grace and Ayr of the Piece”. The attitude that a painter gave to his figures translated the way in which they were meant to be received by the spectators, without those same spectators perceiving the intervention of the artist: Raphael “generally gave his figures a gentle and gracious air, which delighted, and produced passion, [ . . . ] I know not which air of sainthood, and divinity (not only in the faces, but also in all their movements), which seemed to remove from the mind of men all bad thought” (*donne generalmente à ses figures un air doux & gracieux, qui ravit, & enflamme, [ . . . ] je ne sais quel air de sainteté, & de divinité (non seulement dans les visages, mais dans tous leurs mouvements) qui semblent ôter de l’esprit des hommes toute pensée mauvaise*) (Dolce/Vleughels, 1735, p. 241–243).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

## Sources

Aglionby, 1685; Bell, 1728; Beurs, 1692; Bosse, 1649, 1667; Da Vinci, 1651; De Lairese, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1708; Dolce/Vleughels, 1557 [1735]; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; La Fontaine, 1679; Pader, 1653 [1657]; Sanderson, 1658; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694].

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Air of head ⇒ Coutenance  
 Antique ⇒ Beauty, Choice  
 Antipathy ⇒ Colour, Colouring, Harmony (of colours)

## ANTIQUITY

fr.: *Antiquité*  
 germ.: *Antik*  
 nl.: *Oudheid*  
 it.: *Antichità*  
 lat.: *Antiquitas, Vetustas*

**Antique, ancient, after the antique, model, copy, modern, nature, perfection**

*Throughout the modern era, ancient art remained an unavoidable reference, appearing as a standard of authority as much in the training of artists as in the elaboration of the critical judgement of art lovers and connoisseurs. Although this status can undoubtedly be seen when reading the texts, it also explains the predominance of terms such as Antique or Ancient: Antiquity was effectively defined above all through its works and authors or artists, who were used as models. In this respect, ancient sculpture was an example to observe and copy, particularly for the measures and proportions of figures. But beyond this, it was also the manner of the Ancients that had to be imitated given how much they served as the model of perfection that complemented that of Nature. This manner and status nevertheless did not prevent ancient art from facing criticism at the end of the 17th century, in the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns.*

## Antiquity, Antiques and the Ancients: Artists, Works and a Status of Model

Dictionaries and the definitions they provided at the entry for Antiquity made it possible from the outset to observe the absence of strict chronological boundaries for this period which, in the usage of the modern era, hardly referred to a definite historical period. Antiquity thus corresponded to “past Centuries” (*Siècles passés*, Richelet, 1680; Furetière, 1690) or “centuries far in the past” (*siècles fort esloignez*, *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française*, 1694), in other words, an indeterminate period that can be found in the 18th century, particularly in the encyclopaedias of Diderot and d’Alembert, or Watelet and Levesque (1751–1765, t. 1; 1788–1791, t. 1).

This generic use of the term may also explain its relative rarity in the texts, and in the truly significant passages from this point of view, with the term “antique” being preferred: in their respective glossaries, Félibien and Aglionby retained an entry for *Antique* rather than for *Antiquity*, a choice that was also made by Corneille, Lacombe and Pernety or Watelet and Levesque (Félibien, 1676, p. 471; Aglionby, 1685, *An Explanation* . . . ; Corneille, 1694; Lacombe, 1752; Pernety, 1757; Watelet and Levesque, 1788–1791). And it was effectively with the term *antique* that a more explicit meaning appeared. On the one hand, it referred directly to “Greek and Roman” works (Audran, 1683, preface; Furetière, 1690), from a period extending from “Alexander the Great to Emperor Phocas” (*d’Alexandre le Grand à l’Empereur Phocas*, De Piles, 1668, Remarque 39; Richelet, 1680, p. 33; Aglionby, 1685, “Antique”; Lacombe, 1752; Pernety, 1757), in other words, to what we can now assimilate with classical Antiquity and which included, in certain cases—but in a relatively rare manner—Egypt, as in Sandrart (1675, p. 83) or Lacombe. On the other, the term used as a common noun designated remains that were once again clearly identified as such, including medals, inscriptions and statues, as Peacham reminded us, and to which De Piles added vases and bas-reliefs (1661, p. 104–105; 1677, p. 42–43), whereas dictionaries more globally included the remains and other curious monuments from Antiquity (*Dictionnaire de l’Académie française*, 1694 or Marsy, 1746, amongst others). Of the most synthetic and characteristic definitions, it is also relevant to cite those of Aglionby and Lacombe, mentioning “the pieces of Painting, Architecture and Sculpture by the most famous artists from Antiquity” (*les morceaux de Peinture, d’Architecture & de Sculpture des plus célèbres artistes de l’Antiquité*).

Indeed, with the ancient works, their authors, collectively referred to as the *Ancients*, also took precedence over the use of the term *Antiquity*. Opposed to the Moderns and, in this sense, attached to past yet ill-defined times, the Ancients—taken not only in the sense of ancient peoples but also artists—were named explicitly and associated with emblematic figures: Apelles, Zeuxis, Timanthes, Polygnotus and Protogenes for painting, Phidias, Praxiteles and Calamis for sculpture (Junius, 1641, p. 25–26; Aglionby, 1685, p. 16–17; Perrault, 1688, p. 197–199 in particular; Dolce/Vleughels, 1735, p. 191). More than a simple observation, the predominance of these two terms—*ancient* and *antique*—essentially bears witness to the particular status given to Antiquity, which was above all that of model, both for the training of artists and that of taste. Through this value of example, it was thus as much the antique works that needed to be observed and copied, as the manner of the Ancients that needed to be imitated.

#### Imitating the Ancients as the Basis for Drawing in the Face of the Truth of Nature

All authors agreed on this affirmation, with more or less nuance: drawing after the ancients was one of the essential stages in a painter's apprenticeship. Some, such as La Fontaine, simply gave general recommendations, encouraging students to draw "without stopping" (*sans relâche*) after the ancient Greeks (1679, p. 52). Others were more precise. Bosse, for example, insisted on the proportions and air of sculptures, joined in this sense by Lairesse and De Piles (1649, p. 99 and 1667, p. 34–35; 1701, p. 47–48; 1708, p. 404–405), to which Sandrart and Audran added measures (Sandrart, 1679, p. 13; Audran, 1683, préface). From this perspective, and with the models present becoming more scarce in the field of painting, it was thus ancient sculptures that took precedence over pictorial models. From the *Farnese Hercules* to the *Apollo Belvedere*, via *Hercules and Telephos*, the *Borghese Gladiator*, the *Medici Venus* or the *Laocoön*, there was effectively no shortage of examples—conditioned by the discoveries that marked the modern era. Furthermore, the works that compiled engravings and representations of antiques guaranteed even broader diffusion of these reference works. In France, François Perrier's collection (1638) participated fully in the circulation of models in the first part of the century, but collections of this type multiplied throughout the 17th century and were, in some cases, directly produced by art theorists: in 1680, Sandrart put together a real catalogue of antiques, with texts and illustrations

for each sculpture (*Sculptura veteris admiranda . . .*), as for Audran, he accompanied his preface with a great number of illustrations in 1683, whereas Testelin added a table of “*Examples for Proportions and Contours*” (*Exemples touchant les Proportions et les Contours*) to his text, containing five representations of statues accompanied, like those presented by Audran, by indications of the measurements and scale. Intimately linked to the outlines, proportions and measurement of bodies—and, by extension, to anatomy—the antiques were in this sense directly connected to the practice of drawing.

By extension, the value of model extended to the confrontation of these works with Nature, the object of imitation *par excellence*. While Audran stood out as an exception, stating that he had “learnt everything from Antiquity” (*tout pris sur l’Antique*, 1683, préface), Testelin for example esteemed that studying the ancients was more advantageous than studying nature when training painters, but encouraged students to “subject themselves” (*s’assujettir*) to both, and to “imitate their object exactly” (*imiter exactement son objet*, s.d. [1693 or 1694, p. 11]). Like many authors in the Renaissance, and following on from Dolce (Dolce/Vleughels, 1735, p. 191), Aglionby in turn gave precedence to the ancients, designating them as the “Correction of Nature by Art” (1685, p. 104–106). Cultivating a balance between the two, there were on the contrary many who encouraged the association of copying antiques and Nature, for example Bosse, Smith or Lairesse (1649, p. 20 and 99; 1692, p. 64–67; 1701, p. 76–77). For De Piles, nature and antiques had a more complex relationship. In his earlier works, the author believed that observing Nature “tempered the immobility of ancient Figures” (*tempère cette immobilité des Figures antiques*) before placing Rubens’ “truth of nature” (*la vérité du naturel*) above any “taste for Antiquity” (*goust de l’Antique*, 1677, p. 42 and p. 256), before ultimately combining the two models and restoring Rome as the best school with regard to drawing—because it was based on the Antique—or Raphael as the “guide through the fortunate mixture the he had made of the Antique and Nature” (*guide dans l’heureux mélange qu’il a fait de l’Antique et de la Nature*, 1708, p. 148, 158–159 et 404–405). Instead of excessively simplistic evolution, it is above all necessary to see here in the French theorist a form of synthesis in which, despite everything, Nature retains its primacy, remaining the source of all representation: “Antiquity is only beautiful because it is based on the imitation of beautiful Nature” (*l’Antique n’est beau que parce qu’il est fondé sur l’imitation de la belle Nature*), he thus stated in 1708 (p. 148).

Like the words of De Piles, it was ultimately this confrontation between nature and sculpture that can be seen in the reproductions of the antiques. Be it in the plates by Perrier, Sandrart, Testelin or Audran, no copy effectively made do with being an exact imitation as recommended by the theorists in their discourse. On the contrary, they all included effects of light and shade, accentuations of movements and expressions. More than a simple statement, the copies of the antiques that illustrated these works thus bore witness in turn to the constant relationship with Nature, and were in conformity with the recommendations of Rubens, which privileged the flesh over marble.

### Beauty, Perfection, Nobility and the “Manner of the Ancients”

The model aspect of Antiquity would nevertheless not be limited to training painters and the preponderant role that the ancients played with regard to representing the human figure and, beyond that, imitating nature in painting. Intervening almost as a *topos*, the expressions designating the “antique taste” (*grand goust de l’antique*, Bosse, 1667, p. 18–19; Richardson, 1719, p. 78–79), or “the great and noble manner of the Ancients” (*la grande et noble manière des Anciens*, Perrault, 1688, p. 10) bore witness to the reverence that theorists, artists, art lovers and scholars paid to Antiquity and its art. The same was true for a great many affirmations praising the beauty of antiques, through laconic formulae. Presented as a “rule of beauty” (*règle de beauté*) by De Piles, La Fontaine and Marsy (1668, *Remarque 39*; 1679, p. 27; 1746), boasted as “beautiful in every period” (*beau dans tous les temps*) by Lairesse (1701, p. 76–77), the art of the Ancients was also raised up as a model of perfection by Audran and Dolce/Vleughels (1683, preface; 1735, p. 191). Despite these few qualifying adjectives, it was nevertheless not easy to determine which precise characteristics, specific to ancient art, made it possible to attain such beauty and perfection. In addition, the pictorial works illustrating these aesthetic concepts were not particularly numerous either. The *Aldobrandini Wedding* remained the most commonly cited reference, to which can be added Apelles’ *Venus Anadyomene*, Timanthes’ *The Sacrifice of Iphigenia* or Zeuxis’ *Centaur Family* (a work that has nevertheless remained without copy and missing). Finally, Perrault cited the name of *Ovid’s Tomb* (1688, p. 219–220), the frescos found in Rome in 1674 around the *Tomb of the Nasonii*, which Bellori and the engraver Bartoli copied and published in a joint work in 1680 (the engravings by this same

Bartoli furthermore served as the reference for a work published later, between 1757 and 1760, by Caylus and Mariette, *Recueil des peintures antiques, (. . .) d'après les desseins coloriés faits par Pietre-Sante Bartoli*. Here then, antique painting and its examples were more mixed with sculptures to be used to illustrate the discourse on art.

An in-depth reading of the texts is nevertheless necessary in order to go beyond these clichés and to identify what the “manner of the Ancient” really meant for the Moderns. Extending their admiration with regard to the drawing and proportions of figures, Aglionby, Perrault and Richardson all held in esteem these same antique figures in accordance with more detailed criteria. Their form and colouring, for example, retained the attention of Aglionby, who cited Zeuxis on this occasion (1685, p. 9–12); the “nobility and dignity of the attitudes of the heads” (*noblesse & dignité des airs de testes*) were pointed out by Perrault (1688, p. 219–220), who was joined in this sense by Richardson who, in addition to the grandeur, stressed the grace found in the painting of the Ancients, and particularly in that of Apelles; a grace and grandeur that he later attributed to the figures as much in the attitudes of their heads as in their attitudes as a whole (1725, p. 203–204 then 248–250). In Sandrart, this time it was the art of the draperies that was praised and, more specifically, the delicacy and adjustment of the clothing on several statures, including the *Farnese Flora*, or their “twirling” nature (1675, p. 83). The draperies were also mentioned by Lairese, who recalled that their folds and cloth furthermore had to correspond to the rank of the figures represented, thus returning to the concept of decency, to which he further added that of contrast—all the elements that the theorist believed present in the art of drawing of the Ancients (1701, p. 47–48). A few decades apart, Junius and De Piles between them brought together all these elements in a manner that was both clear and concise. For his part, Junius praised the simplicity of the colours and the “graceful neatness”, before ultimately qualifying ancient art as majestic in its simplicity (1641, p. 346–347). Through the intermediary of Pamphile, De Piles in turn justified the beauty of the Antique through “the correction of the form, the purity and elegance of the outlines, and the nobility of the expressions, the variety, the good choice, the order and negligence of the adjustments, but above all, great simplicity” (*la correction de la forme, la pureté & l'élégance des contours & la noblesse des expressions, la variété, le beau choix, l'ordre & la négligence des ajustemens; mais surtout une grand simplicité*, 1677, p. 40–41). In 1708, grace was added to the elegance (1708, p. 404–405).

Finally then, through recurrent terminology focused on similar notions, such as nobility, majesty, grandeur and elegance on the one hand, then grace, beauty and perfection on the other, it is quite easy to identify the elements that underlay the taste of antique aesthetics. There were of course still the figures, praised for the attitudes of their heads, their general attitudes and their expressions which were both dignified and contrasted—or varied—depending on the vocabulary of the different authors, but also for the art of the draperies, which seemed to give them life, whilst respecting the rules of decency; drawing, which had the reputation for being clean and elegant, thus rendering them both pure and simple; simplicity was finally mentioned with regard to the colours, but without any further detail. Putting into perspective these aspects of elegance, purity and simplicity thus linked antique art to a form of art that was partly based on the principles of order and sobriety.

#### The *Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns*: Towards a Contrasted Vision of Antiquity?

At the end of the 17th century, the concept of perfection had become an increasingly central issue in theoretical debates, and these debates would then place Antiquity and its status of unfailing model at the heart of the discussions. The intervention of Charles Perrault at the Académie française in early 1687 was in this sense a key moment: the author read *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand*, a poem dedicated to the glory of modern times and the French monarchy, represented by Louis XIV. Following on from this reading, in the next decade he published the *Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes* (1688–1697), in which he defended the works and productions of his contemporaries compared with those of the Ancients, by taking an interest in all the fields of art and science. In his preface, he thus, with regard to the *Beaux-Arts*, meant “seeing what degree of perfection they succeeded in achieving on the greatest days of Antiquity, and noting at the same time what reasoning and experience had subsequently added, particularly in the century in which we are currently” (*voir à quel degré de perfection ils sont parvenus dans les plus beaux jours de l’Antiquité, & de remarquer en même temps ce que le raisonnement & l’expérience y ont depuis ajouté, & particulièrement dans le Siècle où nous sommes*), and further indicated that he “revered the Ancients, without adoring them” (*révérer les Anciens, sans les adorer*). As Perrault’s words suggest here, there was in this vision of History a notion of progress that the writer and scientist Bernard de Fontenelle



explained clearly in his *Digression sur les Anciens et les Modernes* (1688). Opposing them, the partisans of the Ancients such as Boileau or La Fontaine continued to defend Antiquity, giving rise to the famous *Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns*, which had an impact in all artistic fields.

In painting, the most emblematic work in this context naturally remains that of Perrault himself, opposing in the form of a dialogue three characters representing the different schools of thought at the time. He denounced, for example, the attitude of connoisseurs in the face of paintings by the Ancients and, whilst recognising certain qualities in their paintings, he nevertheless made several criticisms (1688, p. 237–238). His criticisms focused particularly on the absence of perspective, the lack of order and the poor mixing of colours, judging that the rendering of the works was “without union, without liaison and without the softness of living bodies” (*sans union, sans liaison & sans cette mollesse des corps vivans*, 1688, p. 219–220). Through these remarks, he opposed Zeuxis, Timanthes and Apelles on one side, and Raphael, Titian and Veronese on the other (1688, p. 197–199 et 219–220).

Nevertheless, one must not attach the comparison between the Ancients and Moderns, and the reflections on the different ages of painting and its possible progress, to a few key players and an excessively restricted time period. In his *De Schilder-konst der Oude*, Junius already distinguished, for example, different ages for antique painting and showed his preference for the most ancient periods (1641, p. 346–347). He was followed by Lairesse who, at the turn of the century, paid homage to both periods, *ieder in 't zyne volmaakt* [each perfect in itself] before giving the advantage to the perfection of the Ancients in terms of drawing. The Dutchman took advantage of this to contradict the progressive vision of art and History, and presented modern art as the infancy of drawing in the face of its *naar haar Zuster Antik, die ouwer en wyzer is* [sister Antiquity, older and wiser] (1701, p. 46–47). It would thus be easy to put Lairesse on the side of the partisans of the Ancients from reading his words in a later work, *Groot Schilderboek*: “The antique is beautiful in all periods, whereas the taste of the moderns follows constantly, in all parts of art, the continual revolutions in fashions and the daily whims of so-called connoisseurs of our time” (“[ . . . ] want het Antiek gaat in alle tyden door; en het Modern verandert t'elkens van Mode, geevende door haare eigene benaaming haare veranderlykheid genoeg te kennen [ . . . ]”), 1712, p. 167). But it was

also the same Lairesse who, in order to defend the quality of the light in Dutch painting, justified that Raphael, Poussin and the great masters had not used the double light method “for that art had not yet, at their time, attained this degree of perfection in this part, to which one has brought it since” (“alzo de Konst toenmaals in die deelen haare volmaaktheid noch niet had bereikt of verkreegen”, 1712, p. 284–286). Similar contradictions could be found in De Piles, who praised the manner of the Ancients, whilst simultaneously praising that of Rubens (1668, p. 101; p. 248 and 257–258) before ultimately agreeing with the fact that “the True Ideal is a choice of diverse perfections that are never found in a single model; but which are drawn from several and ordinarily from the Antique” (*Le Vrai Ideal est un choix de diverses perfections qui ne se trouvent jamais dans un seul modele; mais qui se tirent de plusieurs & ordinairement de l’Antique*, 1708, p. 32). For their part, the Englishmen Aglionby and Richardson aimed to be more conciliatory and gave equal degrees of perfection to Zeuxis, Apelles and the Carracci, Raphael, Titian or Giulio Romano (1685, p. 16–18; 104–106; 1719, p. 78–79; 1725, p. 203–204). Depending on what was at stake and the specific contexts of each country and author, the *Quarrel* thus found an echo in many writings on art throughout the 18th century with the culmination point in the writings of Johann Joachim Winckelmann, which appeared in the second half of the century.

Nevertheless, the ideal Beauty represented by Greek art, as conceived by the German neoclassical theorist, must not resemble the end point of all the writings on art in the modern period, and less still mask the variety in the discourses. All parallels between the different authors reveal the recurrent questions that crystallised the debates on the subject of Antiquity: copying antiques and its role for the representation of figures and, more generally, drawing; the relationship between the antique model and Nature; the confrontation between the Ancients and Moderns, and finally the quest for perfection and the ideal. And each time tensions and dissensions are palpable. Where many encouraged painters to produce an exact copy, others—including sometimes the same people, even in the same text—demanded that they move towards less affectation; where authors admired the dignity of ancient figures, they simultaneously criticised their dryness or lack of vitality; where Antiquity was seen as the ideal, at the same time it was confronted with the input of the modern artists. All these tensions were in part characteristic of the practices of art at the time, in which the search for simplicity and elegance went hand in hand with vibrant and natural

painting. More than a single Antiquity, truly one and idealised as in the conception of Winckelmann, it was thus above all a vision made of contrasts, in which Antiquity was called up to be reborn and in which—without necessarily being an ideal—it remained a constant reference, as much for the artists as for art lovers and theorists.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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## ART

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| fr.: <i>art</i><br>germ.: <i>Kunst</i><br>nl.: <i>konst(kunst)</i><br>it.: <i>arte</i><br>lat.: <i>ars</i> |
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**Mechanical art, liberal art, painting, Fine Arts, science, theory, practice, rule, pleasure, imitation, artist**

*The term art reveals a major paradox in the literature on art in the modern period. There is no entry for the word in the Dictionnaire portatif de peinture et de sculpture published by Pernety in 1757, and, in many of the dictionaries published in France, England and Germany, the term applies as much to the humanities in the broadest sense of the term, as to chemistry or even watch-making. The same paradox can be seen in books on art theory, with the word used relatively little on its own. On the other hand, it is frequently associated with painting, sculpture etc., and the authors, who*

*generally painters, tried to shed light on the matter. Nevertheless, before being used in the term Beaux-Arts by Batteux in Les Beaux-Arts réduits à un même principe (1746), and despite the rarity of the term's occurrence, the concept of art was developed and defined in relation to other significant notions.*

From the Parallel between Mechanical Art and Liberal Art, to that between Art and Science

Although the conquest of the nobility of art and artists was established during the Renaissance, and the art of painting, considered until then a mechanical art, was elevated to the rank of liberal art (joining poetry, rhetoric, etc.), this point was still the subject of lively discussion within the various artistic circles and dictionaries. It should nevertheless be stressed that, for the latter, the word itself did not imply any aesthetic notion. It was related to mastery of a certain know-how in a wide range of different fields, and the quality of industriousness was extended to artists (*Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, 1694). This connotation of skill and adroitness came from the Latin root, *ars* (or *techne* in Greek). The concepts of mechanical and liberal persisted in dictionaries until the end of the 18th century (Watelet, Levesque, 1788).

In Germany and the Netherlands, the etymological origin of the terms *Kunst* and *kunst* (*konst*) indicates a reference to other notions. Sandrart thus defined *Kunst* as coming from *können* (to be able), which refers to practice, and *kennen* (to know), which applies to theory, thus expressing a change in the paradigm linking art and science, theory and practice (Sandrart, 1675, p. 73). The emergence in artistic discourse of the concept of science modified conceptions of art. Félibien associated art and science in his definition, “ART: *On dit une chose faite avec art & science, ou artistement faite*” (“ART: something made of art and science, or made skilfully”, 1676, p. 478). Like other authors, Fréart de Chambray considered that the Science of Painting (geometry, optics, perspective, all essential for disposing the figures in the painting) “*tire la Peinture d’entre les Arts mécaniques pour luy donner rang de Science*” (“removes Painting from one of the Mechanical Arts, and elevates it to the rank of Science”, 1662, p. 19). The opposition between mechanical art, a practical more than theoretical skill, and liberal art, which is exclusively a skill of the mind, on the one hand, and on the other art and science, which is still evident in Furetière’s *Dictionnaire* (1690),

clearly reveals the progress made by theorists when defining the notion. Félibien used this assimilation of art with science both to distinguish the learned painter (“*peintre savant*”), capable of solving the mysteries of art, from the painter-labourer (1666, *1<sup>er</sup> Entretien*, p. 29), and to qualify good practices and good quality in a work “*avec art et science ou artisement faite*” (“with art and science or skilfully made”, 1676, p. 478).

### Hand and Mind, or Theory and Practice

That artists claim art as a science is essential. The turning point came about because the theorists, as early as the 17th century, expressed art simultaneously as a manual skill and an intellectual activity emanating from the mind. This was the position that was most certainly the one defended by artists as early as the 16th century in Italy, and it continued to be expressed in this way. Effectively, diffusing the notion of reason (essentially invention and its expression through composition and drawing) as an opposition to practice (proportion, perspective and colour) was still very widespread amongst Italian theorists or the theorists from the mid-17th century in France or England. But the role played by the intellectual part of art became one of the main subjects of debate in writing, leading to major changes in the concept of art.

The distinction between the intellectual or spiritual on the one hand, and the mechanical on the other, dissolved under the initiative of art theorists such as Joachim von Sandrart in Germany, Samuel Hoogstraten in the Netherlands and Roger De Piles in France, through their conception of colour. From the outset, the artists had to conceive the distribution of colours in their mind. This approach to art in its dual dimension of invention and practical expression made it possible to redefine the concept of theory in a new manner, turning it into an expression of practical skill. The fact that the practice was not only an expression of the artist’s skill, but, being dependent on his spirit, was also the expression of his mind, is new in the second half of the 17th century. This concept was taken up by Diderot, in his article in the *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des métiers et des arts* (1788).

Furthermore, the term was repeatedly associated with the concept of rules. This was the second point of convergence between the concepts of art and theory. From the perspective of a closer relationship between theory and practice, the precepts—which are essential for learning the

art of painting—played a role in making practice a science. Furetière (1690) spoke of an “*amas de règles*” (“mass of rules”), just as Chambers (1728, p. 143) insisted on their necessity for the successful production of effects. The question of rules was all the more important for artists in the context of the academies that were being created all over Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries. All the art literature insist on their importance. However, the theorists did not aim to define the rules in a rigid manner, and engaged artists not so that they would respect them scrupulously, but rather that they would be aware of them, and would fill themselves with understanding and memory, so as to allow themselves to be guided by them (Testelin, s.d. [1693–1694], p. 14).

The principle of assimilating art with rules was confronted with the concept of genius, thus making possible a further mutation in the two concepts. Just as we speak of the art of an artist, and not of that of a craftsman who knows well how to make a watch, we no longer associate genius with the manual skills of a craftsman, but rather with “*l’acquisition des règles et secrets de l’art par l’exercice*” (“the acquisition of the rules and secrets of art through practice”, Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668, v. 30–36).

### The Purposes of Art

The great paradox in the term as we use it is that the basis of the art of painting is imitating nature. Mimesis is the key principle that can be found in all the treaties on painting in all their multiple variants. Art is described as an artificial object that is nevertheless capable of supporting nature (Bate, 1634, p. 112, Sandrart, 1675, 1679), exceeding it, and making it both beautiful and noble (Richardson, 1719, p. 15–16). There are many quotations that express the importance of imitation, and they can be found in a wide variety of different contexts.

In order to attain this quality, the imitation of which it is question here must not be simply a copy, nor a slavish imitation, but rather an act of creation or recreation associating the eye that observes nature with the imagination, intelligence and skill of the artist. This is what many authors, such as Junius, refer to as the “free spirit of an artist”. Nature is no longer simply the model, and artists must not limit themselves to reproducing its forms, but must instead attach themselves to life and diversity, in search of truth. This is how the notion of art gained in depth.

As pointed out by De Piles, imitation thus plays a part in creating an effect on the spectator, and this is considered to be the aim of art. Chambers also mentions this particularity—that painting creates an effect—to the extent that he speaks of *Effective Art*. This is not only deception, but pleasure for the eyes (*placere*) and it is made into an essential issue alongside instruction (*docere*) and emotion (*movere*) (Junius, 1638, p. 321–322). Attracting the senses is made possible by means of the artifice used by the painter to make the imitated object realistic. De Piles made this the “*but des Sciences et des Arts qui ont pour objet l’imitation*” (“aim of Sciences and Arts, whose objective is Imitation”, 1708, p. 23), and the foundation of what he called the *beaux-Arts* (written without a capital letter, 1708, p. 23, 30). The term was already present in 1666 in the Preface to Félibien’s *Entretiens*, and can also be found in the writings of Du Bos, Richardson, and then Batteux, who all present imitation in an even clearer manner as a source of approval and pleasure. This new meaning, attaching the concept of beauty to the term art, clearly shows the distance that needed to be covered. This also explains the slow progression in thought on art since the debate on the subject during the Renaissance and later, during the Enlightenment, with the affirmation throughout Europe of the *Beaux-Arts* (*Schöne Künste, Belli arte . . .*).

The rarity with which the word is used, in its simplest form, corresponds to a change of paradigm. Far removed from its definition in dictionaries, the discourse on painting recovered the term by connecting theory and practice, on the basis of the characteristics that are generally attributed to it from outside the artistic field. From the end of the 17th century, however, the concept was extended to amateurs, and art thus appeared as the expression of an experience for both the painter and the spectator, in this way modifying the very nature of the work of art, and the definition of the artist.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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## ARTIFICE

fr.: *artifice*  
 germ.: /  
 nl.: *vaardigheid*  
 it.: *artificio*  
 lat.: *artificium*

**Pageantry, brushstroke, light, colouring, chiaroscuro, illusion, effect**

*Artifice has the same root as the words art and artist, and this proximity can be found in many other languages (artifice in French, artifice in Italian or artifex in Latin). For this reason, the term often enters into the definitions used in painting. When Félibien used it in relation to history or composition (Félibien, 8<sup>e</sup> Entretien, 1685, p. 295) or when he described his aim, that is, to deceive the eye, he established a direct correspondence between the art of painting and artifice. One should not however conclude that the two terms are synonyms or interchangeable. On the other hand, if we go beyond the definition in painting, and despite the fact that the term does not appear in the dictionaries, the concept of artifice occupied an important place in France in the theory of art in the 17th and 18th centuries.*

### Brush, Colour, Light

The common ground evoked in most of the definitions in painting is the question of bringing a three-dimensional space and all the visible objects, on a two-dimensional surface (De Piles, 1715, p. 28). This was the key to artifice. De Piles thus listed the different ways of dealing with the foreground of a painting in order to “make use of the artifice of the painting” (*faire jouer l’artifice du tableau*), attract attention, and please (1708, p. 225–226). Since Alberti, this concern has been that of all the theorists. They responded in a variety of ways. Although relief and volume could be expressed through drawing, or depth through perspective, it was nevertheless necessary for colour and light to come into play in order to render the area of the painting realistic, or to create the illusion that it is so.

The discourse on artifice focused on these concepts from the 17th century on, particularly in France, and then adopted a new route. The distinction between artificial and natural colours, which was frequent in writings on art, did not define artifice. On the other hand, reference to the material (which was generally the realm of technique) was not dissociated from the description of its effect. Both approaches were often presented simultaneously in the same treatise, or even in the same passage. There thus appeared to be a certain permeability between the two registers which nevertheless seemed so different in nature (for example, green, blue or yellow produce a certain effect, which can be mixed with one another depending on the sympathy or the friendship that exists between them), inducing real dialectics between material and artifice. From the same point of view, Félibien associated this delightful blend of colours that produces “joy for the

eyes” (*de la joie aux yeux*) from “the artifice of the brush” (*l’artifice du pinceau*) (3<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, 1672, p. 157–158). The brush evoked precisely this ability of the painter to master effect. But light also played a key role in this transformation of the material-colour into a coloured matter. This was at the heart of the conception of the artifice.

Two notions, colouring, that is the union and the harmony of colours on one hand, and *chiaroscuro* on the second hand, were presented by De Piles as the real tools for creating artifice. In the poem *De Arte graphica* by Dufresnoy (translated by De Piles, 1668, p. 27), colouring (also known as chromatics) was qualified as pageantry. This idea was taken up by De Piles (1699, p. 59–61). It reinforced the illusionary nature of painting which, thanks to colour, was capable of recreating the impression of an object’s reality through pictorial matter. Light and shade were the agents that transformed this coloured matter by which they acquired the ability to create an effect. The French theorists thus defined the artifice of *chiaroscuro* as “the intelligence of the effects that this shade and light are capable of causing in their assembly” (*l’intelligence des effets que ces ombres & ces lumieres sont capables de causer dans leur assemblage*). Light and shade naturally play an important role in relation to colour, but also in relation to the composition and the distribution of mass. Much more than Caravaggio, of whom theorists spoke little in terms of example, it was Rubens and Titian who were used as models (De Piles, 1703, p. 103). It was thus in terms of artifice that Richardson spoke about light (1725, p. 119–120).

#### From Deceit to *Vraisemblance* and Truth

The notion of deceiving the eye was omnipresent in all definitions of painting. It was then accompanied and supported by anecdotes on *trompe-l’œil*, most commonly taken from Pliny the Elder’s *Natural History*, or updated on the basis of the same schema with regard to modern works, such as for example Rembrandt’s *Girl at a Window* (Dulwich, Picture Gallery). The anecdote recounted by De Piles on the subject of a painting he bought for his collection is one of the only references to the *trompe-l’œil* genre in French artistic literature (1708, p. 10–11). Rather than defining artifice, it highlights the effect, and the difference between truth in painting which is not really true but which must appear so.

Similarly, even though he himself created *trompe-l’œil* in painting, Hoogstraten did not define the genre, but instead approached the

question from the definition of perfection: “A perfect painting is like a mirror of nature, making things that are not there appear to be, and which deceives one in a permissible, pleasurable, and praiseworthy way” (*een volmaekte Schildery is als een Spiegel van de Natuer, die de niet en zijn, doet schijnen te zijn, en op een geoorlofde, vermakelijke en prijselijke wijze bedriegt*, 1678, p. 24–25). He then developed the different sorts of allowed deception, effective and pleasing to the eye though without giving any of their characteristics.

Although it is true that the nature of artifice is to create an effect, and its aim is to deceive, this deception does not in fact deceive. Therein lies all the ambiguity of artifice. Thus, to the dialectics between artifice and matter were added those of artifice and nature. Even if nature remained without doubt a model to be followed, copying it without making use of artifice was insufficient. Artifice was needed to hide any defects and to give the impression of grace, not only in portraits, but also in compositions (Richardson, 1719, p. 65–66, 1725, p. 82–83). An imitation that is too faithful cannot produce anything other than a *petit-goût*, or a landscape that is “simple, without pageantry and without artifice” (*simple, sans fard & et sans artifice*) (De Piles, 1708, p. 202–203). For De Piles, the artifice of light and colour made it possible to attenuate any poverty of nature (De Piles, 1699, p. 59–61). Although based on exaggeration, it nevertheless needed to be accompanied by discretion, in particular in portraits (1708, p. 272–273). Thus an “admirable industry” (*admirable industrie*) was able to “make painted objects seem more real than the real ones themselves” (*faire paraître les objets peints plus véritables que les véritables eux-mêmes*) (De Piles, 1677, p. 299–301).

### Showing and Revealing the Truth, but Hiding Artifice

Deceiving is not the only aim of artifice. It aims above all to render the effect of truth, whilst remaining invisible. The term *artifice* was thus sometimes taken in the sense of facility (Junius, 1638, III, VI, 3, p. 325–326). This meaning was also developed by Dufresnoy. In order to be pleasing to the eye, a painting must give this impression of facility. Similarly, to produce the expected effect, the artifice must be concealed, “The greatest of all forms of Artifice is to make it appear that there is none” (*Le plus grand de tous les Artifices est de faire paroistre qu’il n’y en a point*). To achieve this, the intervention of the artist’s spirit was needed: this would only be possible “after having turned

[things] round in your mind for a long time” (*qu’après avoir long-temps roulé [les choses] dans vostre Esprit*) (Dufresnoy/De Piles 1668, p. 44). De Piles developed this approach through the example of Rubens, who masterfully attained this aim, and his paintings were more exquisite than nature and the painted objects more real than the real ones themselves (1699, p. 59–61).

Hidden, the artifice of colouring, or *chiaroscuro*, needed to be effective if it were to surprise the viewer, or even attract his regard. “A real painting should call out to its viewers through the force and great truth of its imitation, and the viewers must enter into conversation with it” (*La véritable peinture doit appeler son spectateur par la force et la grande vérité de son imitation, et que le spectateur doit entrer en conversation avec elle*) (1708, p. 9). The painting should even “force the eye to regard it” (*forcer l’œil à le regarder*) (1708, p. 10). The discourse around the notion of artifice had shifted. After having evoked the means to be implemented, the stakes, he raised questions about the power of the painting on the viewer. Looking from afar or from close up were two different gazes that De Piles dissociated (1708, p. 129). It was necessary to step back to see the effect, and to move closer to understand the artifice (De Piles, 1677, p. 299–301). Real connoisseurs were those who associated both gazes, admiring the artifice up close and the effect from a distance (Cours, 1708, p. 129).

Abandoning the distinction between connoisseur and ignorant, Diderot amplified the discourse on artifice. Regarding Chardin’s *Ray* (ca. 1725–1726, Paris, musée du Louvre), he described the gaze changing position, “Approach, everything is blurred, flattened and disappears; step back, and all falls back into place and reappears” (*Approchez-vous, tout se brouille, s’aplatit et disparaît; éloignez-vous, tout se recrée et se reproduit*) (Salon de 1763, X, p. 194–195), and then speaks of magic: “We hear nothing about this magic. There are thick layers of colour applied one after the other, and the effect transpires through each” (*On entend rien à cette magie. Ce sont des couches épaisses de couleur appliquées les unes sur les autres et dont l’effet transpire de dessous en dessus . . .*) (*Ibidem*, Salon de 1763, X, p. 194–195). Although the term magic had already been used by Dufresnoy with regard to colouring (Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668, p. 27), its use intensified in the 18th century. Because the discourse on artifice was gradually shifting away from that of imitation, the notion of magic had a tendency to replace that of artifice. The word magic was thus used to translate *houding* (*magie* in the French translation by Lairese), or was associated

with harmony or whole together, as many types of artifice that the theorists in the 17th century tried to explain. The notion of artifice was the foundation of the pictorial experience, which included the painter's gestures and the viewer's gaze.

Michèle-Caroline HECK  
[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

De Piles, 1668, 1677, 1699, 1708, 1715; Diderot, 1763; Diderot, D'Alembert, 1751–1780; Du Fresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Félibien, 1666–1688; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Richardson, 1715 [1725], 1719.

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Artisan  $\Rightarrow$  Artiste, Painter

## ARTIST

fr.: *artiste*  
germ.: *Artist, Künstler*  
nl.: *artiest, kunstenaar*  
it.: *artista*  
lat.: *artifex*

**Painter, artisan, workman, practioner, mechanical arts, liberal art, Fine Arts**

*The ubiquity that the term artist has acquired in the vast majority of European languages is the result of a process that has taken several centuries. As presented in the literature devoted to art in Italy, France and England, the semantic evolution of the term started with Dante (1265–1321). In Michelangelo's circle, the artista went through its first, temporary renaissance. In Baldinucci's Vocabolario (1681), under the lemma Esercitatore d'Arte, Lat. Artifex, artista occupied a role equal to that of artefice, artiere and artigiano, although in his collection on the lives of the artists, Notizie de' professori del disegno, he privileged (as did most of his contemporaries) artefice to designate the profession. In Italy, the transformation of various designations for those who produced art into artista as the determining first type and representative of the entire field of art only occurred towards the end of the 18th century. The semantic evolution of artista and its French and English equivalents was characterised by considerable asynchronism.*

### Cultural Transmissions in Shakespeare's England

In *An Apology for Poetry* by Philip Sidney, written around 1580 and published posthumously in 1595, an *artist* was a scientist and, in the same way as a historian, a representative of the *studia liberalia* (1965, p. 103); Sidney distinguished them from poets, who had imagining and inventing fictions at the heart of their preoccupations. His advocacy was addressed to them alone. Under the title, *Examinations on men's wit*, the translation of *El Examen de l'ingenios* (1575) by Huarte attributed to Carew appeared in 1594. For the Spanish *artífice* and the Italian *artefice*, the text—translated from the Italian version of *Essame de gl'ingegni de gl'huomini* (1586) by Camilli—systematically used *artificer*—also for whatever concerned painting (“Paynting, drawing, writing . . . which artificers make”, 1594, p. 103). One passage in the English text differed from its models. It concerns the question of *genius* and other extraordinary mental and physical faculties: these faculties are “more necessarie in a king, than any artiste whatsoever” (1594, p. 252)—a passage that Lessing translated by “than any artist or scholar” (*als irgendeinem andern Künstler oder Gelehrten*, 1752, p. 344). In *A Worlde of wordes* (1598), Florio's Italian-English dictionary, *artista*, *artefice* and *artigiano* were used as synonyms and translated by *artificer*. Another work by Florio made it possible for the artistic semantic field of *artist* to make its mark in England: his translation of Montaigne's *Essais* from 1603, which is considered to be one of the classics of English literature. In the third tome of Montaigne's *Essais*, the noun is rare,

but the adjective *artiste* on the other hand is relatively common. Florio substantivises all the expressions and thus makes available a significant resource, providing the impetus for the development of its own semantic tradition. In England, the orientation of this semantic towards the artistic professions was first of all the act of the Elizabethan playwrights, as seen in the multiple incidences in Shakespeare (*The Tragedie of Troylus and Cressida*, 1600-01, *All's Well That Ends Well*, 1600-05, *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, 1608–11), John Webster (*The Duchess of Malfi*, ca. 1611), Ben Jonson (*The Alchemist*, 1612), Francis Beaumont, John Fletcher (*The Humorous Lieutenant*, 1618) and William Rowley (*The Birth of Merlin*, ca. 1620–21). Without doubt the English term owed its remarkably stable evolution to these influential multipliers—an evolution that was even capable of resisting the militant attacks by the puritan enemies of paintings, directed against *lascivious pictures* (Prynne 1633, s.p.).

#### The Artist-Gentleman (1600–1649)

The miniaturist and portrait painter, Hilliard, opened his *Treatise concerning the Arte of Limning* (circa 1600) with a theme that would accompany the English literature of the 17th century devoted to art: the art of drawing was noble and ingenious. Taking classes in this discipline was worthy of a gentleman. In Peacham's *Art of drawing*, the producer of art, as distinguished from a simple craftsman, was qualified in these terms. Peacham praised the “most excellent painters” from Antiquity, qualified as “famous Artists” (1606, p. 10). In his *Compleat Gentleman* (1622), artistic practice was associated with belonging to a higher class. For Peacham, the higher class was composed of two levels: “Nobilitie” and “gentry”. For a professional painter, neither one nor the other gave access or possibilities for ascension:

touching Mechanicall Arts and Artists, whosoever labour for their livelihood and gaine, have no share at all in Nobilitie or Gentry: As Painters, Stageplayers, Tumbler, ordinary Fidlers [ . . . ] and the like.  
(Peacham, 1622, p. 12)

In the third edition of his work, Peacham initially used the same terms to describe the unfavourable career perspectives of painters (1634, p. 13), before then proposing a wholly different orientation in a new chapter (*Of drawing, limning, and painting; with the lives of the famous Italian painters*). In reference to Aristotle, he described painting



and drawing as “generous Practices of the youth in a well governed Common-wealth”, in many respects “usefull to a Gentleman” (1634, p. 124). He recalled that the Greeks classified painting as one of the liberal arts: “Painting was admitted into the first place among the liberal Arts”. Painting was thus said to be capable of allowing those who regarded it to discover what the furthest flung regions of the world had to offer that was rare and memorable. For the Romans, the “Sirname Pictor” was an honorary title, and the associated status was neither “base” nor “servile” (1634, p. 125). In his *vitae*, he reported that Giotto (c. 1266–1337) was praised “by the Artists of his time”, that Simone Martini (c. 1284–1344) “was a rare Artist”; alongside Raphaël (1483–1520), the Bellini, the Pollaiuoli, Botticelli (c. 1444–1510), and Mantegna (c. 1431–1506) were praised as a priority as “excellent and famous Artists of Italy” (1634, p. 152).

In the English version—*The painting of the Ancients* (1638)—from *De pictura veterum* (1637), Junius argued against the modern forms of pastimes such as “stage-playes, banquets, cards and dice” (1638, p. 13). He was critical of contemporary art. Painting, which the ancients considered to be one of the “most worthy Sciences” was lost, because contemporary art was obliged to make a living in other ways: “without ingenuitie, after the manner of other sordide, mechanike, and mercenarie Arts” (1638, p. 254). Despite everything, Junius’ book is an apology for the dignity of painting, and painter was a “high title”, for which he used the synonyms *artist* or *artificer* (1638, p. 15, 39, 72, 210, 213, 289). After the Stuart period, it was *artist* that dominated, a term that Browne accepted in gentleman’s society and featured in the title of his *Ars pictoria, Published for all Ingenious Gentlemen and Artists* (1669). For Browne, painting was “a liberal Art” (1669, p. 25), a superior ideal of education, independent of any belonging to a social class. From *Painting illustrated in three diallogues* (1686) by Aglionby, the term *artist* was commonly used as the designation of a profession, chosen by those that it designated. Chronologically, the English “artist” easily overcame its French rival, as was quite evident in the English translations of French literature devoted to art.

### Painter and *Artist*: the Role of Translations

The translation by Evelyn of Fréart’s *Parallèle de l’architecture antique avec la moderne* (1650) was published in 1664 with the title *Parallel of the Antient Architecture with the Modern*. It included an original

contribution entitled *An Historical, an Etymological Explanation of certain TERMS*. The contemporary artist (“our artists”) was not an honorary title, but a (good or bad) attestation of skills and professionalism, covering a wide range, from the very lowest level of “dishonest, or unskillful Artists”, “vulgar and pittiful Artists”. A distinction was made between *artist* and “Artizans and Workmen, as Masons, Stone-cutters, Quarry-men” etc. who worked at crafts. The translation by Evelyn of Fréart’s *Idée de la perfection de la peinture* (1650) was published in 1668 with the title *An Idea of the Perfection of Painting*. Evelyn translated Fréart’s expressions *artisans de tous mestiers* (1662, préf. n.p.) by “Artificers of all Trades”, and *excellens Artisans* by “excellent Artists”. Depersonalising the painter and the artist as can be seen in Fréart’s formulations, such as “without which Painting could not subsist” (*sans quoy la Peinture ne peut subsister*) (1662, p. 8), was dissipated in Evelyn’s translation: “without which a Painter can never emerge good Artist” (1668, p. 9). The *ouvriers* represented “workmen”, who Evelyn nevertheless classified within craftsmen. Fréart designated the profession with the term “painter” (*peintre*); Evelyn in general used the word “artist” (1662, p. 13, 55, 82, 123; 1668, p. 14, 56, 84, 125), and the *grand Peintre* became the “noble Artist” (1662, p. 80; 1668, p. 81). Fréart’s expression, *nostre moderne*, which referred (in a critical manner) to Michelangelo, was loaded with the reference to the profession in the English translation: “our new Artist”. The observation of a temporal semantic difference was renewed when comparing the translations by De Piles and Dryden of Dufresnoy’s *De arte graphica*. The French text ignored any allusion to the profession: nobility and grace were rare gifts that “man received more from Heaven than from his Studies” (*l’homme reçoit plutôt du Ciel que de ses Estudes*), according to the translation (1668, p. 24). According to Dryden, they represented something (1695, p. 31), “which the Artist receives rather from the hand of Heaven, than from his own Industry and Studies”.

### The Concept of *Painting Skilfully* and its Authors

In 17th century France, academic recognition of artistic professions, which was expressed from an institutional point of view in the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture* founded in 1648, did not lead to an unequivocal designation of the profession that was in harmony with its development: the creator of something *made skilfully* was not called an artist, but rather a practitioner, a craftsman or a worker. The first uses

in French of the term artist are found as a continuation of the Italian semantics. The travel journal kept in 1580–1581 by Montaigne during his trip through Switzerland and Italy was written partially in Italian. He qualified a manufacturer of instruments as an *artista uomo ingegnoso* (*famoso da far belli instrumenti di matematica*; 1774, III, p. 204). In the third tome of the *Essais*, written between 1586 and 1587, the artist was an expert whose field of expertise covered the artistic domain, but was not limited to it. Who other than artists would organise the chaos and instability of the world, he asked (in Florio's 1603 translation):

I leave it to Artists, and I wot not whether in a matter so confused, so severall and so casuall, they shall come to an end, to range into sides this infinit diversity of visages; and settle our inconstancy and place it in order.

(*Je laisse aux artistes, et ne scay s'ils en viennent à bout en chose si meslée, si menue et fortuite, de renger en bandes cette infinie diversité de visages, et arrester nostre inconstance et la mettre par ordre.*)

(1774, III. xiii, *Of experience*)

In many passages in the *Essais*, the *artisan* is a person who practises a manual profession, a characterisation that also applies to painting (“excusable in a painter or other artisan”) (*excusable à un peintre ou autre artisan*, II.xvi, *Of glory*). It was necessary to wait until the second half of the following century to find (rare) incidences of the term artist in French literature on art. In Bosse's *Avertissemens* in *Le Peintre Converty* (1667), artist was used as a common denomination that designated a wide range of artistic professions (*Painters, Sculptors, Engravers, Drawers, & similar Artists*). This uniform designation of the profession used by Bosse, which was totally new in the French-speaking world, was not adopted immediately. The *Dictionnaire des Termes propres* (1676) by Félibien proposed different entries for artisan and artist:

ARTISAN. This term is used often by an dfor those who excel, and it is said of the great Sculptors and great Painters from Antiquity, that they were excellent Artisans [ . . . ]. ARTIST, a Worker who works with art and facility. This word is still particular to those who work on operations of Chemistry.

(*ARTISAN. Ce mot est relevé souvent par et pour celuy d'excellent, & on dit des grands Sculpteurs & des grands Peintres de l'antiquité, que c'estoient d'excellens Artisans. [ . . . ] ARTISTE, un Ouvrier qui travaille avec art & facilité. Ce mot est encore particulier à ceux qui travaillent aux opérations de Chimie*)  
(Félibien, 1676)

The attachment to chemistry (or alchemy) had been documented earlier in a letter dated 12 July 1661 from Chapelain to Brioux (1883, p. 137): “Artist is said well of the Worker in the noun form, particularly in Chemistry, he is an excellent artist” (*Artiste se dit fort bien de l’Ouvrier au substantif, surtout en Chimie c’est un excellent artiste*). This attachment to a term from the field of chemistry can also be found in the dictionaries of Furetière (1690), of the Académie française (1694) and in the *Dictionnaire de Trevoux* (1704). For Félibien, artisan corresponded to the everyday type, whereas artist was characterised by *facility*, forming a special case. Evidently, this designation represented for him a derivation of the adjectival form, *artistement* (“skilfully”), which had its own entry in his *Dictionnaire*: “Something made skilfully, that is with practice and facility” (*Une chose faite artistement, c’est-à-dire avec pratique & facilité*, 1676, p. 476). In the literary sources from the 17th century devoted to art, the rare occurrences of the noun *artiste* contrasted openly with the frequent use of the adjectives “skilfully” (*artistement*), and “artist” (*artiste*). They were encountered as early as in the third tome of Montaigne’s *Essais*: the kingdom of Mexico and its kings “were somewhat more encivilized, and better artists, than other nations of that world” (*plus civilisez et plus artistes*, III.vi, *Of Coaches*). The word simultaneously acquired a negative connotation of an affected, artificial and complicated nature: “I meane not a scholasticall and artist meane (*moyen scholastique et artiste*), but intend a naturall meane” (III, viii, *Of the art of conferring*). Bosse associated first *Artiste*, & *Croquée* (1649, *Définitions* n.p.) with the facility of a frank, raw and sketched brushstroke. At the same time, the term was used in the sense of perfection (“But for the *Artist*, we can make this distinction as often, and rightly, it is said in several well completed or finished ways, that they have been Painted Skilfully, or in other words, made with great Art”, *Mais pour l’Artiste, on peut en faire cette distinction, puis que souvent & avec raison il se dit de plusieurs manieres bien achevées ou finies, qu’elles sont Artistement Peintes, ou pour parler autrement, faites avec grand Art*, 1667, n.p.) This designation indicated artistic perfection in Fréart’s *Parallèle* (“created and completed skilfully”, *artistement elabourez, & achevez*; 1650, p. 68) as it did later in the *Idée* (“designing and outlining things skilfully”, *desseigner et contourner artistement les choses*, 1662, p. 77). Félibien (1666, *1<sup>er</sup> Entretien*, p. 67) used the word in the context of painting in *trompe-l’œil* in Antiquity. In *Réflexions Critiques* (1719), Dubos documented a lexical deficiency: “That Painters and Poets forgive me for designating them under the

name of Artisan in the course of these Reflections” (*Que les Peintres & les Poètes me pardonnent de les désigner souvent par les nom d’Artisan dans le cours de ce Réflexions*). In his opinion, there was no more appropriate word for designating the representatives of fine arts.

### The Representative of the Fine Arts and their Adversaries

At this period, semantics were already starting to undergo a transformation. In his *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697), Bayle spoke first of “the Artists of Europe” to designate the representatives of the disciplines of medicine and natural science; in the article *Apelles*, it was a question of painters, and more specifically the painters at the Court, who, in Bayle’s eyes showed no evidence of any noble disposition in the sense of courtesy and gentleness (*honnêteté*): “It is necessary to be . . . on the foot of the clown in the court (*Il faut être . . . sur le pied de bouffon dans le cour*).” Under the influence of English authors, the use of the term artist became systematic, for example in the *Traité de la Peinture et de la Sculpture* by Richardson, who attributed the aesthetics of the sublime by quoting Milton, “The Artist must also be inspired by a Divine fire/To try what no Human has yet done” (1728, p. 213). In *Le Temple du Goût* (1733, p. 62), Voltaire used artist for *fine arts*—a concept that had already been encountered in Fréart (1662, p. 6): “Colbert protected all the fine arts, without being jealous of Artists, and did not favour only the great Men” (*Colbert protégea tous les beaux Arts, sans être jaloux des Artistes, qu’il ne favorisa que de grands Hommes*). Batteux was in the continuity of these authors with *Les beaux arts réduits à un même principe* (1746, [1747], p. 34). Free creativity was the characteristic of the professions associated with fine arts: “The Artist . . . composes in his mind a Whole of which he conceives a vivid idea that fills him. Soon, the fire is ignited, on viewing the object: he forgets himself; his soul passes into the things he creates” (*L’Artiste . . . compose dans son esprit un Tout dont il conçoit une idée vive qui le remplit. Bientôt son feu s’allume, à la vue de l’objet: il s’oublie: son âme passe dans les choses qu’il crée*). Utilitarian thought had no role to play (“utility has no right of entry”, *l’utilité n’a droit d’y entrer*, 1747, p. 46). Around 1750, the artist was promoted to the eminent rank of protagonist in artistic creation in the literary sources devoted to art—as seen in Font de Saint-Yenne (1746, 1754), Baillet de Saint Julien (1748), Cochin (1751, 1755, 1758), Lépicié (1752), Deschamps (1753), Esteve (1753), and Laugier (1755). Jeurat’s *Traité de Perspective à l’usage des Artistes*

(1750) marked the first appearance of the term in the title of a work. Artistic lexicography at the time recorded these impulsions: Marsy (1746) generally used the term “author” (*auteur*) to speak of the free artist; in his article Mignard (*Mignart*), it was a question of the “great artist” (*grand artiste*). In Lacombe (1752), the term *artiste* (“artist”) has its own entry. He was the representative of the liberal arts, “We give this name to those who practise one of the liberal arts, and particularly Painters, Sculptors and Engravers” (*On donne ce nom à ceux qui exercent quelqu’un des arts libéraux, et singulièrement, aux Peintres, Sculpteurs et Graveurs*). Pernety (1757) used it in his article *Peintre*: “Artist who with the help of colour, placed in accordance with the rule of Drawing” (*Artiste qui avec le secours de la couleur, placée suivant les règles du Dessin*). The worker (“ouvrier”) was the first victim of this successful revaluation. In the *Dictionnaire de Trevoux* from 1704, it was still possible to read this: “The worker . . . works with great art, and with facility” (*L’ouvrier . . . travaille avec grand art, et avec facilité*). The 1771 edition made a distinction: “We say that a good Shoemaker is a good artisan ( . . . ). Painters, Sculptors, Architects etc. are artists” (*On dit d’un bon Cordonnier que c’est un bon artisan ( . . . ). Les Peintres, les Sculpteurs, les Architectes etc, sont des artistes*). In the *Discours préliminaire* in his *Traité de la peinture* (1765, p. xxix), Dandré Bardon confirmed the semantic slide: “Practice without principles and without genius degenerates into pure routine, and routine makes only an Artisan, which we always distinguish from the Artist” (*La Pratique sans principes & sans génie dégénère en pure routine, & la routine ne constitue que l’Artisan, que nous distinguons toujours de l’Artiste*). During the second half of the century, this elitist theory came up against resistance. The arrival of technique came with a tendency to revalue the mechanical arts; this gave additional impetus to the voices of protest. In his article in the *Encyclopédie*, Jaucourt used the term “People” (*Peuple*) (1765, p. 476) to speak of the world of work that produces values of use. Were excluded from the “category of people” (*classe du peuple*) “this type of artisan, or even better, affected artists” (*cette espece d’artisans, disons mieux, d’artistes maniérés*) who practised an activity in the field of fine art and “who work with luxury” (*qui travaillent le luxe*). The social ascension of artists brought evidence that there was growing inequality in the category of producers: “hands that paint a carriage divinely, that assemble a perfect diamond, that adjust a fashion with expertise, such hands do not resemble those of the people in any way” (*des mains qui peignent divinement une voiture, qui montent un diamant au parfait,*

*qui ajustent une mode supérieurement, de telles mains ne ressemblent point aux mains du peuple*). The criticism of artists as representatives of the fine art professions, made by Jaucourt, was the starting point of an evolution that would culminate in the iconoclasm of the revolution to come.

German semantics occupied a totally different position; it was marked by the long continuity of the *Künstler* (*Künstner* in the 16th century, *kunstenaar* in Dutch). Like the other theorists before him, in his writings Winckelmann used the term *Künstler* exclusively for the field of fine art. But in his French correspondence, Winckelmann used “artist” (“French and English Artists”, *des Artistes François et Anglois*, “the name of an Athenian Artist”, *le nom d’un Artiste Athenien*, [ed. 1952, p. 210, 247]); he used the German loan word, *Artist* in one of his Roman letters dated 20. December 1755 (1952, p. 195): “I have kept my old habits and am living here as an artist”, (*Ich bin noch in meiner alten Form und lebe hier als ein Artist*).

Hans-Joachim DETHLEFS  
[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Aglionby, 1685; Baillet De Saint-Julien, 1748; Baldinucci, 1681; Batteux, 1746; Bayle, 1697; Bosse, 1649, 1667; Browne, 1669 [1675]; Chapelain, [1883]; Dandré-Bardon, 1765; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; Florio, 1598; Fréart De Chambray, 1650; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Hilliard, [1598–1603]; Huarte, 1575; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Lacombe, 1752; La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747; Marsy, 1746; Montaigne, 1580, 1774; Peacham, 1634, 1661; Pernety, 1757; Prynne, 1633; Richardson, 1728; Sidney, 1595 [1965]; Voltaire, 1733; Winckelmann, 1952–1957.

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## ATTITUDE

fr.: *attitude*

germ.: *Stellung, Haltung*

nl.: *actitude*

it.: *attitudine*

lat.: *attitudo*

### Action, figure, motion, posture

*The word attitude was introduced as a term in art theory in Italy around 1500. Its meaning is closely related to the human figure, signifying its posture, animated by physical and psychical movement, as well as actions. In the course of about two centuries, the word experienced a subtle shift in meaning, barely perceived by anyone other than those who were familiar with specialist artistic vocabulary.*

### Attitude as a Term in Art Theory

The word *attitude* is an important term in figure-painting, and refers to the posture, bearing and movements of a figure in a work of art. As a term in art theory it appeared around 1500, and was widely used by the mid Cinquecento. Giorgio Vasari's *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori* and the Italian translation of Leon Battista



Alberti's Latin *De Pictura* by Cosimo Bertoli, published in 1568, were important for the dissemination of the term in art theory (Vasari, 1873–1880; Bertoli, 1568). Alberti himself never mentioned the word *attitude* in either the Latin or vernacular versions of his treatise in the first half of the 15th century (Alberti 1973, p. 71). Bertoli included *attitude* when translating Alberti's mentions of postures and motions of human figures.

Around 1500, Leonardo da Vinci devoted several paragraphs to a discussion of the word *attitudine*. He explained that the attitude of human figures should be rendered in the parts of the body and that the intention of the mind should be visible in the attitudes. The concept included the movement of the body and the soul. Da Vinci linked the word to the movements and actions of human beings, stating that painters should observe the attitudes and motions of human beings as they happen rather than trying to make someone pose for impulsive actions such as weeping (Vinci, 1651, chap. CLXXXIII, p. 60, chap. CXCIII, p. 63, chap. CCXVIII, p. 71–72). These connotations were still part of the term when it was included in an extended glossary of art terms in the second half of the 17th century. Filippo Baldinucci's *Vocabulario toscano dell'arte del disegno* associated *attitude* with the words *atto*, *azzione* and *gesto* of a figure, and linked it to movement and expressions (Baldinucci, 1681, p. 17).

The Italian term *attitudine* was adapted in Dutch as *actitude* around 1600. The aspects of the movement and action of figures were again emphasised and even explicitly added to the contexts from which they were taken from the Italian original in Van Mander's translation of Vasari's biographies (Mander, 1604, fol. 109v, 137r, 140r).

### Fine Distinctions between Attitude and Posture

In the second half of the 17th century, a more refined meaning was applied to the term *attitude* in French art theory. Synonymous terms and fine nuances of its meaning became points of discussion. Either the publication of the French translation of Leonardo da Vinci's *Traité de la peinture* in 1651 or an increased use among artists and connoisseurs must have been important for the attention that the word now received. The translator of Leonardo's *Traité*, Roland Fréart de Chambray, elaborated on the traditional Italian meaning of the word and differentiated its connotation. He compared the term *attitude* to the words "action" and "posture" but argued that *attitude* was more

expressive, because neither of the two alternative words could be used to describe dead bodies: not action, because there is none in a dead body, and not posture either, as it would be rude and not even the language of painters to say: “this Figure is in a beautiful posture” (*cette figure est dans une belle posture*, Fréart de Chambray, 1662, n.p.). In the English translation of Fréart’s treatise by John Evelyn, the word “disposition” was suggested as a term to be used together with *attitude* for describing dead bodies (Fréart de Chambray, 1668, n.p.). The term originates in architectural theory, signifying the arrangement of several parts of a building. It added to the traditional associations of *attitude* with action, movement and posture the link with the problem of arranging figures in their compositional context.

The fine distinctions between the meanings and uses of *attitude* and posture were not well-known to those who were not familiar with specialist artistic vocabulary. John Dryden, who is famous for his translation of classical literature, made the first translation of the influential Latin poem *De arte graphica* by Charles Alphonse Dufresnoy into English in 1695, but he was not aware of the discussion surrounding the word *attitude* in art literature. Dryden translated the Latin “*positure*” as “posture”, but he also used “posture” to translate *attitude* from De Piles’ 1668 French translation of the poem (Dufresnoy, 1695, p. 12, 16, 20, 64, 118, 131, 134, 145, 215). Dryden failed to recognise that the word *attitude* conveyed a different notion to an art-literate readership than to readers of translations of classical literature. Before the second edition of the English *De arte graphica/Art of Painting* went into print in 1716, it was given to the painter and translator Charles Jervas, who corrected Dryden’s misunderstanding and changed “attitude” for “*posture*” throughout (Dufresnoy, 1716). The word *attitude* barely differs in its meaning from the word posture, but it was regarded as more elegant and suitable for describing an animated human figure.

Ulrike KERN

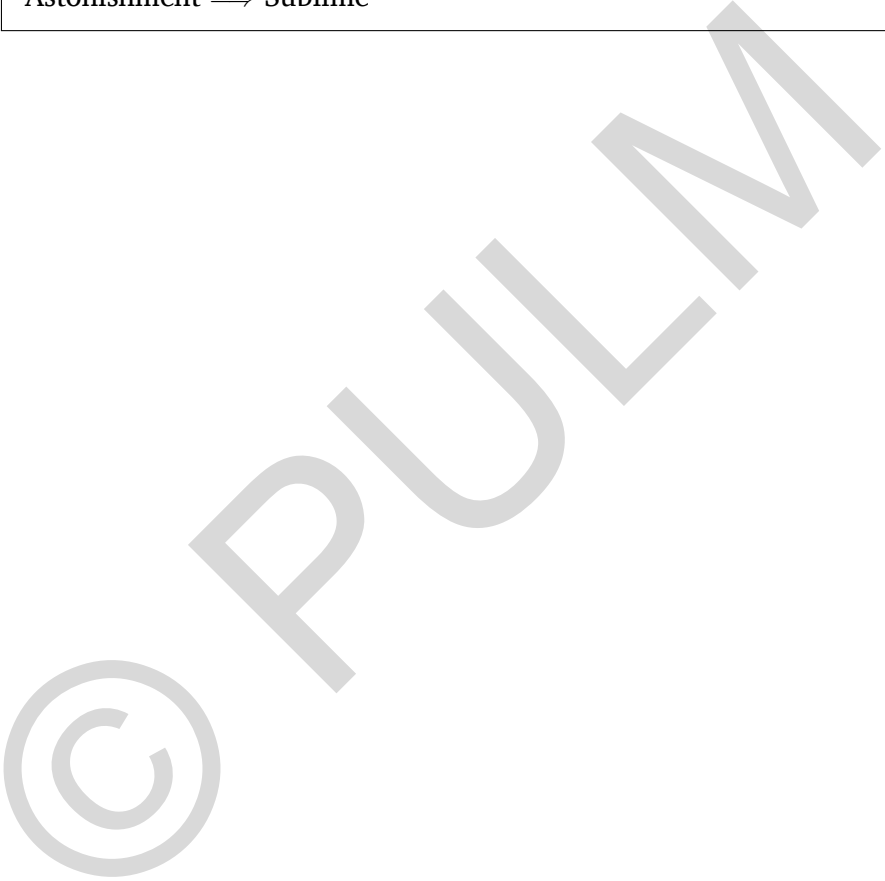
### Sources

Alberti, 1435 [1540]; Baldinucci, 1681; Bertoli, 1568; Da Vinci, 1651; Du Fresnoy/De Piles, 1668 [1695, 1716]; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Van Mander, 1604; Vasari, 1550/1568 [1873–1880].

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Astonishment  $\Rightarrow$  Sublime



# B

Baroque  $\implies$  Caprice

## BEAUTY

fr.: *beau/beauté*  
germ.: *Schönheit*  
nl.: *schoonheid*  
it.: *bellezza*  
lat.: *pulchritudo*

**Antique, beauty of nature, beautiful, grace, ideal beauty, nature, proportion, rule, symmetry, truth, ugliness**

La commune opinion n'admet aucune définition du Beau

(DE PILES, 1708, p. 135)

*“Common opinion does not accept any definition of Beauty” (La commune opinion n'admet aucune définition du Beau, De Piles, 1708, p. 135). Beauty is difficult to define, but is also difficult to see and represent (Félibien, 1<sup>er</sup> Entretien, 1665, p. 23–24), as it is hidden, and the rules are awkward to establish (Félibien, 7<sup>e</sup> Entretien, 1685, p. 155–156). For Lairese, the reason for this lay “only in the idea that our mind creates of it” (que dans*

l'idée que notre esprit s'en forme, 1712, I, p. 20, ed. fr. 1787, p. 74). *For many theorists, Beauty was the most noble part of painting. Dufresnoy made it the first precept of his poem, De Arte graphica "I. Precept. Of Beauty. \*The main and most important part of Painting is to know how to recognise what Nature has done of the most beautiful and the most convenient for this Art; \*of which the choice must be made according to the Taste and Manner of the Ancients [ . . . ]"* (I. Precepte. Du Beau. \*La principale & la plus importante partie de la Peinture, est de sçavoir connoistre ce que la Nature a fait de plus beau & de plus convenable à cet Art; \*dont le choix s'en doit faire selon le Goust & la Maniere des Anciens [ . . . ], *Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668, p. 7*). *Although there was no precision regarding what Beauty was, Lairesse nevertheless defined "three types of Beauty, that is, common, that which is above common (or rare), and perfect"* (trois espèces de Beautés, savoir, la commune, celle au-dessus de la commune ou la rare, & la parfait). *The first "depends to a great extent on fashion and what satisfies ordinary minds" (dépend en grande partie de la mode & qui satisfait les esprits ordinaires), the second is "that of which the mind brings together the different parts of several individuals" (celle dont l'esprit rassemble les différentes parties de plusieurs individus), and the third, "perfect Beauty is purely idealistic" (la Beauté parfaite est purement idéale, 1712, I, p. 21, fr. ed. 1787, p. 75). Furthermore, although beauty clearly lay in the mind of the painter as many theorists proposed, it was also because this ability to recognise natural Beauty was the fruit of genius and not of rules (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 286; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668, p. 4). Through these approaches can be identified various orientations in the discourse on Beautiful things or Beauty in the writings on art. They were formulated through the relationship between ideal beauty, natural beauty and antique, for which choice was essential, in the question of rules, and more generally in that of knowing how beauty could be attained in the creative process, in painting, and how it was perceived by the spectator.*

### Ideal Beauty and Natural Beauty

The importance of the intellectual aspect of painting in invention and composition was undoubtedly affirmed with force, as was the order of a painting compared with the good order within the universe. But it is impossible not to see in the writings on art in the 17th century

that the terms *beautiful* and *beauty* were used little in the sense of the neo-Platonic *Idea* or an ideal, or a transcendental form to which the painter could conform. Although there was no strong assimilation of the *Idea* with *Beauty*, it was nevertheless obvious that beauty was formed in the idea or imagination of the painter, but it was above all associated with the sensitive experience of nature. Félibien cited Plato and the analogy that the philosopher made between *Beauty* and *Goodness*, but in reference to the importance of the body's beauty which "consists in a just proportion of the members, in the colour of the flesh and in grace" (*consiste dans une juste proportion des membres, dans la couleur de la chair & dans la grace, 10<sup>e</sup> Entretien, 1688, p. 202–203*). In fact, beauty was sought in the conception of a form through the proportions, in that of an appreciable order or a good effect, in decency and harmony, and above all in nature:

That if it is a great advantage for man to understand in his mind the images of animate and inanimate bodies, how worthy of admiration is it to be able to trace the resemblance, and even more, form an idea of all the beauties in Nature to create a more perfect one.

(*Que si c'est un grand avantage à l'homme de comprendre dans son esprit les images des corps animez & inanimez, combien est-ce une chose digne d'admiration d'en pouvoir tracer la ressemblance, & encore plus de se former une idée de toutes les beautez de la Nature pour en faire une plus parfait*).

(Félibien, 1688, 10<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 295)

The focus was placed on the natural more than on an ideal that needed to be sought. When Dufresnoy said that *Genius* was capable of recognising *natural beauty* associated with the *truth* (1668, p. 4), he was very close to the thoughts of Boileau, "Nothing is beautiful but that which is True" (*Rien n'est beau que le Vray, Epître IX*). The choice of beauty had to be reasonable: imitating what was in nature, and reconciling order and disorder, or irregularity in conformity with it. This question was debated in the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture. The answer to the question, "what is natural Beauty?" was that it was necessary to distinguish between simple nature and composed nature "and in the latter, make the distinction between the regular, or that which can be rustic; because in the regular, beauty consists in the symmetry and admirable order of Art, and as for the rustic, its beauty consists in rural irregularity" (*et dans ce dernier faire la distinction du regulier, ou de celui qui peut être rustique; parce que dans le regulier, la beauté consiste en la symetrie & la belle ordonnance de l'Art, &*

*quant au rustique sa beauté consiste dans l'irrégularité champêtre*, Testelin, s.d. p. 39–40, reproduced by Le Comte, 1699–1700, I, p. 73–74).

But the relationship between nature and beauty was more ambiguous than it seemed. Junius opposed what came from the mind and what was produced from nature, and stated clearly that art must perfect nature (1641, p. 15–16, 64). This idea was very widespread. And it was from this perspective that it was possible to understand the role of Antiquity. *Natural beauty* was linked to the *Ancient* for Dufresnoy (1668, p. 20). De Piles reproduced this idea, “you will be a better judge of beauty and the good air of people when you have tasted a little of Antiquity” (*vous jugerez bien mieux de la beauté & du bon air des gens quand vous aurez un peu gousté l'Antique*, 1677, p. 65–66). Because on the one hand, the *Ancient* was only beautiful because it was based on an imitation of *Beautiful Nature* (De Piles, 1708, p. 148), and on the other, because nature is imperfect, French theorists also insisted on the need for choice. It was thus that a copy from the *Ancients* was justified by De Piles, (1668, p. 156) and other French (Perrault, 1688, I, p. 10), and Dutch (Goeree, 1670a, p. 71, 91–92) theorists. It was therefore necessary to choose what was beautiful in the treatment of the figures (body, air, proportions, attitudes, clothes) in order to conform to the *good* or *great Taste* (Bosse, 1649, p. 92–93), or, when referring to the example of Zeuxis and the girls of Croton, “choose what is beautiful in each, and take only what is commonly called a beautiful nature” (*choisir ce qu'il y a de beau dans chacun, & ne prendre que ce qu'on nomme communément la belle nature*, Audran, préface, n.p.). The importance of choice was so great in the concept of *Beauty* that Lacombe, in his *Dictionnaire portatif des Beaux-Arts* did not devote an entry to *Beauty*, and referred to *Choice* (*Choix*, 1752). Choosing the most beautiful in the act of imitating nature had the virtue of perfecting judgement, but more generally the aim was to rectify nature by imitating it. Thus Baillet de Saint-Julien referred to “always painting beauty” (*à peindre toujours en beau*, 1750, p. 10–11), and Batteux, speaking of *Beautiful Nature* (*Belle Nature*) in the Arts, concluded that “it must flatter us in our minds, by offering us objects that are perfect in themselves, which extend and perfect our ideas. That is beauty” (*elle doit nous flatter du côté de l'esprit, en nous offrant des objets parfaits en eux-mêmes, qui étendent & perfectionnent nos idées; c'est le beau*, 1746, p. 87–88).

The position of the English theorists was closer to a search for an *Ideal Beauty* that could be conceived more than was visible in reality:

Beauty, may be perfectly conceived True beauty in any Creature, is not to be found; being full of deformed disproportions, far remote from truth; for sinne is the cause of deformity. Beauty in truth, is, where Joynts and severally every part with the whole.

(Sanderson, 1658, p. 45–47)

Also based on imitating nature, their discourse focused on the importance of choosing the most beautiful things “as Art being the counterfeiter of Nature, must ever endeavour to imitate the most absolute things” (Browne, 1675, p. 20). In his *Discours préliminaire sur le Beau idéal* (1724, published with the French edition by Richardson, 1728, t. III, p. III-LXXII) Ten Kate opposed *Common Beauty* and *Ideal Beauty* which “could not be acquired by simple imitation of a Model, or a Portrait, but only by the force of the most just Ideas, and the most rectified Imaginations” (*ne peut s’acquérir par la simple imitation d’un Modèle, ou d’un Portrait, mais seulement par la force des Idées les plus justes, & des Imaginations les plus rectifiées*, p. ix-xiii). Based on the example of Raphael (1483–1520), he defined the ideal imitation which made it possible, without diverging from the resemblance or character, to create works that were both natural and ideal.

### Creating the Beautiful

Admitting that *Beauty* was pleasing only thanks to rules (De Piles, 1715, p. 10–11) and that the ancient were sort of “rules of Beauty” (De Piles, 1668, p. 156) introduced the idea that it was possible to know how to achieve it. Defining these rules thus became a key issue for the theorists. They agreed that the rules were deduced from imitating nature and ancient statues (Félibien, *1<sup>er</sup> Entretien*, 1665, p. 23–24; Dolce/Vleughels, 1735, p. 261–263), and that they were necessary for the education of young painters and their proficiency. However, they all recognised that they remained hidden, and came up against the difficulty in formulating them (Félibien, *7<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1685, p. 155–156; Goeree, 1682, p. 34–35).

Nevertheless, just as beauty was hard to define, it was just as difficult to represent it. Beauty was essentially defined in relation to the proportion of the bodies with regard to the conception of the body as an image of divine creation. The proportions occupied a very important role in the discourse on art, and in close connection with the concept of beauty. There was naturally recognition of the diversity of proportions according to the different canons defined by Dürer. And this variety



was accepted in the name of the conformity with nature. The focus was placed on the principles of symmetry and harmony, that is, of the analogy of the parts with each other, and with the whole. Just as the conformity of the parts (symmetry) went beyond the beauty of a part (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 50), the beauty of a figure did not lie exclusively in its proportions. Pader made the distinction between natural and artificial beauty: the first was specific to man, the second to its function (1649, p. 11). Many theorists thus evoked the attitude, movement, as well as the contours and colours (Richardson, 1719, p. 15–16). The main idea was that beauty could only be shown through the whole. This was how Dufresnoy defined the “Idea of a beautiful Painting” (*Idée d’un beau Tableau*, Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668, p. 43). The principle of the conformity of the parts that made up a composition thus became the expression of real beauty (Le Comte, 1699–1700, p. 76–77). This harmony of the whole nevertheless did not exclude diversity.

### Seeing Beauty

The beautiful effect of proportions, also called eurythmy by Vitruvius, was indescribable for Browne, but the perfection that combined beauty and grace could nevertheless be perceived by the eyes, and thus transmitted to understanding (1675, p. 1–2). The interest in the perception of beauty was also obvious in the writings of French theorists on the relationship established between beauty and grace. For Félibien, there was beauty without grace, produced solely by the symmetry of the parts with each other, whereas grace could be found even in defective proportions (*1<sup>er</sup> Entretien*, 1665, p. 36–38). The distinction between beauty and grace resulted in a real disjunction between the two concepts in the writings of Roger de Piles when he stated, “That which is Beautiful is not always graceful, that which is graceful is not always beautiful” (*Ce qui est Beau n’est pas toujours gracieux, ce qui est gracieux n’est pas toujours beau*, 1715, p. 10–11). This debate introduced the concept of pleasure “of beautiful people who please us much less than others who do not have such beautiful traits” (*de personnes belles qui nous plaisent beaucoup moins que d’autres qui n’ont pas de si beaux traits*, De Piles, 1668, Remarque 222, p. 112). In the same vein, the Dutch theorists questioned the relationship between beauty and ugliness. Starting with the idea that there are degrees of beauty, Goeree considered that it was possible to appreciate ugliness more than beauty: what the eye appreciates in this case is the art rather than the beauty,

that is, things that are beautiful in a painting when they are ugly in real life (1682, p. 17–19). Similarly, it was the beauty and harmony of the colours in Van Dyck's (1599–1641) portrait of the Countess of Exeter that satisfied the eyes of the art lover, more than her beauty (Richardson, 1719, p. 67).

In the first half of the 18th century, beauty appeared above all as that which was pleasing, far from the conception of a beauty conceived as an idea (De Piles, 1708, p. 135). It was thus no longer its definition that theorists were looking for, but they were clearly expressing the idea that its perception was a matter of looking and feeling. From the pleasure attached to beauty thus appeared the mastery of brushwork:

the mixture of its Colours, in the Skilful Contrivance of the several parts of the Picture, and infinite Variety of the Tincts, so as to produce Beauty, and Harmony. This alone gives great Pleasure to those who have learn'd to see these things. (Richardson, 1719, p. 10–11)

Beauty was naturally made to please, but was not naturally perceptible (“What is Beautiful, and Excellent is naturally adapted to Please; but all Beauties, and Excellencies are not naturally Seen”, 1719, p. 197). Only the eyes of connoisseurs could penetrate the beauties of the different parts of a great master's painting. The perception of the painting thus allowed the viewer to understand its conception:

He sees a Force of Mind the great Masters had to Conceive Ideas; what Judgment to see things Beautifully, or to Imagine Beauty from what they saw; and what a power their Hands were endued withal in a few Strokes, and with Ease to shew to Another what themselves Conceiv'd. (Richardson, 1719, p. 201)

But whereas Richardson considered that only an educated man could see and appreciate, Coypel considered that, as painting imitated nature, “any man of good sense and mind is capable of feeling the great beauties of a painting” (*tout homme de bon sens & d'esprit, est à portée de sentir les grandes beautez d'un tableau*, Coypel, 1732, p. 18–19). The divergence between the authors thus lay in the ease of perceiving beauty. For the French theorist, this ability to feel authorised all men to make criticisms. Even if he brought judgement into play, the feeling was a

natural light [. . .] that allows you to feel at the first glance the dissonance or harmony of a work, and it is this feeling that is the basis of taste, [. . .] this strong and invariable taste of real beauty that is almost never acquired, if it is not the gift of a blessed birth.

(*lumière naturelle* [ . . . ] *qui fait sentir au premier coup d'œil la dissonance ou l'harmonie d'un ouvrage, & c'est ce sentiment qui est la base du goût, [ . . . ] ce goût ferme & invariable du vrai beau qui ne s'acquiert presque jamais, dès qu'il n'est pas le don d'une heureuse naissance*).

(La Font de Saint Yenne, 1747, p. 3–4)

A painting, conceived in accordance with the rules of *Beauty* and *Beautiful Nature* in the painter's imagination, needed to satisfy or flatter the mind and heart of he who looked at it (Batteux, 1746, p. 92–93, 248). By focusing on the way in which beauty could be perceived, the discourse on beauty in the writings published before 1750 in France and England emphasised the essential quality of what Watelet called effective beauty “which produces the most complete mixtures of organic, sentimental and spiritual satisfactions” by distinguishing it from ideal beauty (1788, t. 1, p. 60).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Baillet De Saint-Julien, 1750; Batteux, 1746; Boileau, 1675; Bosse, 1649; Browne, 1675; Coypel, 1732; De Lairese, 1712; De Piles, 1667; De Piles, 1668; De Piles, 1708; De Piles, 1715; Dolce/Vleughels, 1735; Dufresnoy, 1668; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Félibien, 1666–1688; Goeree, 1670; Goeree, 1682; Hoogstraten, 1678; La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747; Le Comte, 1699–1700; Pader, 1649; Perrault, 1688; Richardson, 1719; Ten Kate, 1724 [1728]; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694].

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Becomingness ⇒ Convenience

**BEHOLDER ⇒ SPECTATOR**

**BIZARRENESS ⇒ CAPRICE**

Body ⇒ Carnation, Proportion

Boldness ⇒ Liberty

Branch ⇒ Genre

Brightness ⇒ *Réveillon*

Brunch of grapes ⇒ Group, Colouring, Whole-together

Brushstroke ⇒ Artifice, Handling

By-work ⇒ Landscape, Ornament

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# C

Cabinet ⇒ Gallery

## CAPRICE / BIZARRENESS

fr.: *caprice, bizarrerie*

germ.: *Laune, Eigensinn, Grille, Wunderlichkeit*

nl.: *zinnelykheid, eygenzinnigheyd, grilligheyd*

it.: *bizarria, capriccio*

**Baroque, capriciousness, fancy, artifice, deceit, licence**

“Bizarro” and the verb form “accapricciare” were already used by Dante. In the four major commentaries of Dante in the Renaissance (Landino 1481, Vellutello 1544, Daniello 1567, and Castelvetro 1570), as well as in Italian lexicography of the time, the adjective expressed violence, impetuosity and irascibility, whereas “Capriccio” was used to describe sudden emotional reactions such as, for example, states of fear or excitement. From the start of the Cinquecento, there was a radical repositioning of values in the field of artistic literature: a number of dysphemisms such as *capricci, bizzarrie, grilli, ghiribizzi, and stravaganze* lost their negative connotation and were

upgraded to the rank of recurrent art terms. Serlio's *Regole generali* (1537, f. LXXr), in which "bizzaria" was used as a synonym for grotesque (facevano diverse bizzarie, che si dicono grottesche), played a key role here. In the same work, *capriccio* was used on the subject of hybrid architectural forms and linked to *licenza* and *novita* (à voglia de chi volesse contentar un suo capriccio; *ibid.*, f. Vv). Vasari's *Lives* (1550) was in agreement with this. In his descriptions of the lives *capriccio* and "il modo capriccioso" expressed artistic intelligence, the capacity for invention, fantasy, ingenuity and a generosity of spirit and Vasari qualified with this new term almost all the major representatives of the Renaissance: Paulo Uccello (1397–1475), Donatello (c.1386–1466), Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472), Filippo Lippi (c. 1406–1469), Botticelli (c. 1444–1510), Andrea Mantegna (c. 1431–1506), Filippino Lippi (c. 1457–1504), Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), Raffael (1483–1520), Ugo da Carpi (active 1502–1532), Properzia de' Rossi (c. 1491–1530), Polidoro da Caravaggio (c. 1499–1543), Antonio Sangallo (c. 1455–1534) and more particularly Guilio Romano (c. 1499–1546) (fece di nuove, capricciose e belle fantasie; *ed. cit.* 1984 V, p. 56) as well as Michelangelo (1475–1564) (infinità di capricci straordinari e nuovi; *ed. cit.* 1987 VI, p. 48). The use of *capriccio* as a synonym for *bizzarria* is striking: he qualified a work by Signorelli as an "invenzione bellissima, bizzarra e capricciosa"; *ed. cit.* 1971 III, p. 637). The staircase in Michelangelo's Laurentian Library, which is so much different from the common use of his time was qualified as *bizarre*, here meaning exceptional and innovative (fece tanto bizzarre rotture di scaglioni e variò tanto da la comune usanza delli altri, che ognuno se ne stupì; *ed. cit.* 1987 VI, p. 55). Gilio da Fabriano revisited these evaluation criteria in *Degli Errori e degli abusi de' Pittori* (1564, *ed. cit.* 1961, p. 17,19): in the climate of the Counter-Reform, he recommended an "arte piu regolata" which was supposed to bring an end to the pretention and abuse of artistic freedom, but also above all to the "capricci tali senza regola e senza legge alcuna". In his *Riposo* (1584, p. 360), Borghini presented a transitional compromise. He distinguished "pitture pubbliche" and private images, and then dependent invention and independent invention. For him, public art was part of the realm of dependent inventions: the experts (poets, historians, theologians) had their word to say. For Borghini, the limits of artistic freedom were nevertheless very broad. In many fields, and as long as he did not of his own initiative undertake any modifications to the *Historia*, the painter was authorised to give his caprices free rein.

### *Capriccio* as a Genre

The praise heaped by Fréart de Chambray (1662, p. 7, 25) on Leonardo da Vinci's artistic genius "which is the vivacity and caprice of Invention" (*qui est la vivacité et le caprice de l'Invention*), and more generally on the "capricious fantasies" (*fantaisies capricieuses*) fitted the use of the term by Vasari, which was also true for the first tome of Félibien's *Entretiens* (1666, p. 245): in the Life of Piero di Cosimo (1462–1521), the merits of "the novelty of invention and the ingenious manner [ . . . ] the mind and caprice of the inventor" were praised. But what certainly had an even greater influence on the semantic evolution of the 17th century was the separation made by Borghini between the fields of *historia* and *Capriccio*. This is documented in Bellori's Life of Giordano (*fece innumerabili quadri, storie sacre, e profane siccome varj capricci*; 1672, p. 361) and Dezallier's account of Parrocel ("he was still painting portraits, history and subjects of caprice", *il peignoit encore le portrait, l'histoire & des sujets de caprice*; 1754, p. 366). With the separation of situations of observation depending on the public or private nature of the sites, he created a prerequisite for a separation of genres. The *Capriccio* became a genre in its own right. The diversity of genres corresponded to a differentiation in the sensitivity of perception and the behaviour of reception of the spectator. This evolution was reflected in Félibien's *Entretiens*. In the 7<sup>e</sup> *Entretien* he commented on Callot's *Caprices* (1592–1635), praising the imaginative richness, "choosing extraordinary and ridiculous subjects" (*choisissant des sujets extraordinaires & ridicules*) in the name of pleasing the spectator. Voluntary deformations were one of its characteristics—and the means "of entertaining and bringing pleasure to those who gaze upon his *Caprices* was to mark something as defective and deformed" (*de divertir & de donner du plaisir à ceux qui verroient ses Caprices, estoit de marquer quelque chose de defectueux & de difforme*, 7<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, 1685, p. 60). Towards the end of the century, the meaning given to this word was reviewed. For Restout, "caprice" meant a "disregard for rules" (*mépris des règles*) on the part of people "unworthy of the name of painter" (*indignes du nom de peintre*) that he also qualified as "cacopainters" (*cacopeintres*) or "Leaders of the Cabal" (*Chefs de Caballe*, 1681, p. 37, p. 12–13). In *L'idée du peintre parfait*, De Piles focused for future painters on a rigorous study of nature and the Grand Masters, "rather than make of a caprice something false" (*plutôt que de faire de son caprice quelque chose de faux*, 1699, p. 13). The "vrai-semblance", observed Dupuy du Grez



(*Traité sur la peinture* 1699, p. 306), was an aspect so important in the composition that only a tiny number of painters denigrated it, “when they follow their caprices, rather than reason and nature” (*lorsqu’ils suivent leur caprice, plutôt que la raison et la nature*).

### Revisionism in the Historiography of Art. The Bizarre and the Baroque

The same depreciating tendency can be observed regarding the concept of bizarre. Its deterioration gained ground at the start of the next century and attained its apogee during the Enlightenment, in the middle and second half of the century. The use of the words *bizarre* and *baroque* as synonyms was a manifestation of this degradation in terminology. The *Nouveau dictionnaire de l’Académie Française* (1718) noted: “baroque can also be used in the figurative sense, for irregular, bizarre and unequal. A baroque mind, a baroque expression, a baroque figure” (*baroque se dit aussi au sens figuré, pour irrégulier, bizarre, inégal. Un esprit baroque, une expression baroque, une figure baroque*). This use also extended, and for a long time, to the dictionaries from other countries. Grimm (*Deutsches Wörterbuch* 1854 I, p. 1139) wrote: “Barockisch should correspond to the French *baroque*, bizarre in our language” (*Barockisch soll das französische baroque, bizarre unserer Sprache bequemen*). In addition to the connotation of strange and singular, it was the sense of the irregularity of objects that predominated, as can be observed in Le Virloys’ dictionary of art in 1770: “Baroque is used for things that have an irregular shape” (*Baroque, se dit des choses qui ont une figure irrégulière*). In the *Encyclopédie méthodique* by Quatremère de Quincy (1788) the term meant both *abuse* and *refinement*. “What austerity is to wisdom and taste, *baroque* is to bizarre, that is, it is the superlative” (*Ce que l’austérité est à la sagesse et au goût, le baroque l’est au bizarre, c’est-à-dire qu’il en est le superlative*). In the artistic literature from the period, the negative lexicographical relations were strained. The use of *bizarre* that Coypel (1721, p. 120–121) chose for his paragraph on the “great taste of drapery” (*grand goût de draper*) was pejorative: “outrageous bizarreness that goes as far as extravagance” (*bizareries outrées qui vont jusqu’à l’extravagance*). Cignani (1628–1719), Maratta (1625–1713), Bernini (1598–1680) and their pupils had gone too far with their innovations, particularly “in the bizarre affectations of their draperies” (*dans les bizarres affectations de leurs draperies*). They had moved away from the “simple and majestic nobility” (*noblesse*

*simple et majestueuse*) that reigned among the Old Masters and Raphael. He warned against taking too much distance from the rules established by the Old Masters, rules which were based “on reason and nature” (*sur la raison et la nature*). In the *Lettres familières* by De Brosses (1736–1737), a transfer of meaning could be identified: starting with the description of the object, and going as far as the characterisation of a period. Its range nevertheless remained totally undetermined (ed. 1869, p. 105). The adjective, baroque, effectively characterised for him the immediate past, “the last baroque” (*du dernier baroque*) like the taste for gothic, and beyond that all that was small, delicate and detailed in art (“with gothic tastes being small, delicate and detailed”, *le goût gothique étant petit, délicat, détaillé*). The verdict in the article *Bizarre* of the *Encyclopédie* (1751, p. 268) was indisputable: “The whimsical is not seen without the chimeric; the bizarre, without the extraordinary; the capricious without the arbitrary [ . . . ] all these characters are incorrigible” (*Le fantasque ne va point sans le chimérique; le bizarre, sans l’extraordinaire; le capricieux, sans l’arbitraire [ . . . ] tous ces caractères sont incorrigibles*). Laugier (1753, p. 14) considered that *bizzareries* and *caprices* were deviances from what was True and Essential: “It is in the essential part that every form of beauty is found [ . . . ]. In the parts added by caprice are found all the defects” (*C’est dans les parties essentielles que consistent toutes les beautés [ . . . ]. Dans les parties ajoutées par caprice consistent tous les defaults*). For Rousseau, it was in the search for difficulty that lay the semantic link between the terms bizarre and baroque: “What I understand by genius is most definitely not this bizarre and capricious taste that spreads the baroque and the difficult everywhere” (*Ce que j’entends par génie n’est point ce goût bizarre et capricieux qui sème partout le baroque et le difficile*) (*Dictionnaire de Musique* 1768, p. 109). This discourse on the subject of the *essential* and *easy* in art was supported by the French reception by Winckelmann, in particular his *Histoire de l’art chez les anciens*: “Arpino, Bernini & Borromini were in Painting, Sculpture and Architecture what Chevalier Marin was in Poetry: they abandoned all Nature and Antiquity” (*Arpino, Bernini & Borromini furent dans la Peinture, la Sculpture & l’Architecture ce que le Chevalier Marin fut dans la Poésie: ils abandonèrent tous la Nature & l’Antiquité*, 1764 [1766], p. 233). The accumulations of forms led to smallness in art and decadence, translated in the formal language of the Late Antiquity, as in the later times of Raphael. His *Battle of Constantine* provided the spectator with “an entire, perfect system of art” (*un système entier et parfait de l’art*); Cortona’s *Battle of*

*Alexander versus Darius* on the other hand was “a confused and bizarre heap of figures conceived and executed in haste” (*un amas confus et bizarre des figurines conçues et exécutées à la hâte*) (*Empfindungen des Schönen* 1763, or *Du sentiment du beau* 1786, p. 274). The taste for the bizarre blossomed everywhere where artists were allowed to give free rein to their own whims (*Gedanken über die Nachahmung* 1756, or *Réflexions sur l’imitation* 1786, p. 60). As a historical source for this artistic conception of easy and essential, Lodovico Dolce found himself given a new prominence. His *Aretino* (1557) raised Raphael’s *facilità* to the rank of universal contemporary model in painting. Dolce included the theme of *Capriccio* in an anachronistic manner in his translation of the opening lines of Horace’s *Ars Poetica*. For Horace, hybrid, chimeric beings may well have been ridiculous, they nevertheless distributed a general licence for artistic audacity (*quidlibet audendi*). On the contrary, Dolce interpreted ancient authority in such a way that it was necessary to place limits on exaggerated creative freedom. Something similar could be found in the French translation of Dolce dating from 1735 (p. 165), which warned against “this bizarre painting” (*ce tableau bizarre*) in the sense of neo-classic artistic discourse. But Dolce’s plea, which went unnoticed amongst the classicists of the 18th century, was nevertheless a discordant voice in broader debate of the Italian Early *Cinquecento* in favour of ingenious *capricci*, *bizzarrerie*, and *stravaganze*, which Raphael himself included in his work.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Bellori, 1672; Borghini 1584; Coypel, 1721; De Brosse, 1739–1740 [1869]; De Piles, 1699; Dezallier D’Argenville, 1745–1752; Dolce/Vleughels, 1557 [1735]; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Félibien, 1666–1688; Gilio da Fabriano, 1564; Grimm, 1854; Laugier, 1753; Le Virloys, 1770–1771; Quatremere De Quincy, 1788–1825; Restout, 1681; Rousseau, 1768; Serlio, 1537; Vasari, 1550/1568; Winckelmann, 1764, 1786.

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## CARICATURE

fr.: *caricature*  
 germ.: *Karikatur*  
 nl.: *karikatuur*  
 it.: *caricatura*

**Portrait, *portrait chargé*, resemblance, figure, beauty, ugliness**

*Caricatures and the portrait chargé developed during the Italian Renaissance, partly in reaction to the concept of ideal beauty. These works, which are different from more traditional portraits, are generally defined as representations of individuals whose physical defects have been exaggerated. Initially conceived as an amusing practice, caricatures evolved during the Enlightenment, taking on a more intense political and social nature. Despite their success with the public, caricatures had to respond to a variety of criticisms so as in particular to be able to impose their legitimacy as an artistic practice.*

The Italian Origins of the Caricature and the *portrait chargé*

The emergence of the caricature and the *portrait chargé* remains problematic. Although burlesque representations have existed since Antiquity, it is nevertheless difficult to define them as such. The Italian artists of the Renaissance, in reaction to the established canons

of beauty, were more likely behind the concept. The Italian term *caricatura*, which is the origin of the French term *caricature*, the English *caricature*, the German *Karikatur* and the Dutch *karikatuur*, seems to have appeared during the 17th century.

As the theoreticians then took an interest in the caricature and the *portrait chargé*, they often presented the two terms as synonyms. A distinction found in the supposed aim of the work nevertheless seemed to exist. In the former, the drawing or painting, conceived as an “amusement of artists, a comical fantasy, a trifling joke” (*amusement d’artistes, une fantaisie bouffonne, une plaisanterie anodine*), highlighted the defects or ugliness of individuals (L. Baridon and M. Guédron, 2015, p. 8). In the latter, during the 18th century, it took on a satirical aim: the artist’s aim was thus to attack a vice, a person or a social body, and no longer to simply amuse. Whatever their aims, these practices were evidence of an interest in the face and its expressions. They developed in parallel to renewed interest in physiognomy, which defines the character of men on the basis of their physical appearance.

The *portrait chargé* in terms of an artist’s amusement was covered in Italian theory in the 17th century. In 1646, Massani, writing under the pseudonym Mosini, explained that Annibal Carrache (1560–1609) produced “exaggerated drawing(s)” or *ritrattino carico* for relaxation purposes, thus providing the “first attempt at a theoretical justification for caricatures” (*première tentative de justification théorique de la caricature*, L. Baridon and M. Guédron, 2015, p. 47–49). Annibal and those around him played on the defects of nature, for the purposes of amusement, but also to “work towards the idea of ‘beauty in deformity’ or *perfetta deformita*”, thus distancing themselves from the concept of ideal beauty (L. Baridon and M. Guédron, 2015, p. 49; M. Melot, 2003, p. 150–151). In his *Vocabolario toscano dell’arte del disegno*, Baldinucci suggested that a *caricature* was a portrait in which the individual’s defects had been highlighted and accentuated to excess, whilst nevertheless retaining a resemblance (1681, p. 29).

### Defining the Caricature and the *portrait chargé*

The terms *caricature* and *portrait chargé* entered French artistic literature in parallel. The latter can be found in Félibien’s *Principes*, where it is defined as a drawing that exaggerates the traits of a person (1676, p. 520). Félibien specified that it is something that is done quickly, “with three or four pencil strokes” (*avec trois ou quatre coups de crayon*,

1676, p. 520). In his opinion, it was not possible to speak of portraits in the strictest sense of the term but “rather of marked defects” (*plustost des deffauts marquez*), even if the person represented remained identifiable (1676, p. 520). Félibien returned to this matter in his *Cinquième entretien*, published in 1679. Citing the example of Annibal Carrache, he added that *portraits-charges* presented a resemblance that was “so ridiculous” that the viewer could not stop himself from laughing when seeing them (*5<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1679, p. 278–279).

Although the *portrait chargé* was used from the second half of the 17th century, the use of *caricature* in French theory came later, with the term only seeming to appear around the middle of the 18th century. The first edition of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* did not mention it, but did propose a definition for *portrait chargé* (1694, p. 171). Caricature only appeared in the fourth edition, being presented as an exact synonym for *charge* (*Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, 1762, p. 248). The definitions of caricature and *portrait chargé* published in the following century did not show any real evolution. The authors still indicated that it was a question of a representation with a resemblance, but underlining the defects in an exaggerated manner (Lacombe, 1752, p. 234; Pernety, 1757, p. 49 and 56; Watelet and Levesque, 1792, t. I, p. 309–314). In his *Dictionnaire abrégé*, Marsy added that an exaggeration could, in certain cases, be a representation in which the physical aspects of individuals were improved, even if this case was rare (1746, t. I, p. 112). He underlined, following on from Félibien, the rapidity of execution of these works (1746, t. I, p. 112).

On the other side of the Channel, the term caricature appeared earlier, as it was used at the start of the 18th century, as shown by Richardson. The definition that he gave was not particularly original as he too characterised caricatures as an exaggeration of defects, whilst nevertheless highlighting the fashion for the genre, spelled *caricaturaes*. Nevertheless, Richardson denounced these works in the name of beauty (1725 [1715], p. 79 and 209). According to him, artists should find their inspiration more in ancient medallions and bas-reliefs than focusing on the ugliness and defects of individuals. This criticism of caricature was developed by Diderot, Pernety and Lessing. According to the former, this practice was a “debauchery of the imagination” (*libertinage d'imagination*), and one that should only be practised “for relaxation” (*par délassement*) (1751–1780, t. II, p. 684). Similarly, for Pernety, caricatures altered the truth and were “contrary to the correction of the design, the regular simplicity and elegance of nature”

(*contraire[s] à la correction du dessein, à la simplicité régulière & à l'élégance de la nature*) (1757, p. 49 and p. 56). As for Lessing, he attacked the apparent ugliness of caricatures (1766, p. 12–13; 1802, p. 12–13). Caricatures or *portraits-chargés* thus remained criticised for their lack of beauty and truth.

Despite these criticisms, the practice developed and diversified in the course of the 18th century to include stronger political and social aspects, particularly in England, as seen in the art of Hogarth (1697–1764). Hogarth nevertheless sought to distinguish his work from caricature, which he considered to be a burlesque exaggeration, a deformation and a whim, comparable to the scribblings of a child. According to Hogarth, it was distinguished from “character”, a more complex art assimilated with a sign of the spirit. The “character” made it possible to reveal the soul of the person being drawn, despite a certain deformation and a satirical aspect (inscription on Hogarth’s engraving, *The Bench*, 1758, London British Museum). Through this difference between excessive and satirical work, Hogarth tried to justify the social and political caricatures on which he worked on several occasions, with the satirical effectively requiring greater talent.

Furthermore, the success of caricature was shown in the publication of several manuals entirely devoted to the art, such as those by Darly (*A Book of Caricaturas*, 1762) and the antiquies dealer Grose (*Rules for Drawing Caricaturas*, 1792; french translation in 1802). These works, which seemed to appear in the 18th century, contained different illustrations and provided the rules that needed to be followed in order to gain in proficiency in the practice. The aim of the authors was to bring legitimacy to the caricature, often considered to be dangerous, by presenting it as an art form in its own right (Grose, 1792, p. 4–5).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Baldinucci, 1681; Fréart De Chantelou [1668 and 1674]; Darly, 1762; Dictionnaire de l’Académie française, 1694, 1762; Diderot, D’Alembert, 1751–1780; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; Grose, 1792; Lacombe, 1752; Lessing, 1766; Marsy, 1746; Mosini, 1646; Pernety, 1757; Richardson, [1715] 1725; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1791.

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## CARNATION

fr.: *carnation*  
 germ.: *Carnation, Fleischfarbe*  
 nl.: *carnaty, vleeschicheyt, lijf-verwe*  
 it.: *carne*

**Flesh, colour, coloring, naked, naked parts, body, mellowness**

*The carnation, mastery of which is necessary for every artist representing human figures, was the subject of particular attention in artistic theory in the modern era. Three themes dominated: the practical aspect, notably the pigments to be used, the suitability of the carnations, and finally the visual effect, that is, the expected impressions of life, natural and mellowness.*

Treatment of the naked parts of the body occupies an important place in artistic theory. The term “skin” was used relatively little in this context until the middle of the 18th century and that of “carnation” was preferred, referring to the substance of the body, rather than its surface. Carnation, defined as the colour and imitation of the flesh, colour and naked parts of the body (Félibien, 1676, p. 511; Marsy, 1746, p. 101–102; Watelet, Levesque, 1792, p. 314) was distinguished



from *incarnat*, which designated only the colour of the flesh, and not its representation (Diderot, D'Alembert, 1751–1780, p. 648).

*Carnation* was sometimes used as a synonym for *chair* (flesh) (Marsy, 1746, p. 106). However, the two terms are different: the former effectively designated “all the nudity of the figures” (*tout le nud des figures*) and “all the parts taken together” (*toutes les parties prises ensemble*), whereas the second was used to speak of “each part considered in particular” (*chaque partie considérée en particulier*), such as a leg or an arm (Marsy, 1746, p. 101–102; Pernety, 1757, p. 48). In English, there was more flexibility as the terms “carnation” and “flesh colour” were often used indifferently (Bate, 1634, p. 125 et 155–156; Peacham, 1661, p. 132; Browne, 1675, p. 28).

### Painting Carnations

Knowing how to paint carnations is essential for any painter who represents figures, be they in portraits, historical scenes or genre painting. Treating the carnation, regardless of the technique used by the artist, was thus the subject of particular attention in the artistic literature of the modern era. Van Mander and Goerre, for example, gave various recommendations regarding pigments, favouring in particular vermilion, the red colour close to that of flesh (Van Mander, 1604, fol. 48v–49r; Goeree, 1670, p. 21–22). These recommendations differed from one author to another: Van Mander advised against using massicot (1604, fol. 49v–50r), unlike Boutet (1696 [1672], p. 20–21). Boutet, like Le Blond de la Tour, provided a longer list of pigments—lead white, red, yellow and green earth, lake, stil de grain, bone black and coal black, ultramarine, vermilion or carmine—, pigments which, once mixed, produced “admirable shades similar to that of flesh” (*teintes admirables qui approchent de la chair*) (Le Blond de la Tour, 1669, p. 47–48; Boutet, 1696 [1672], p. 20–21). As for Sandrart, he advised against using any red that was too brilliant, cinnabar or luminous yellows, and favoured instead green, blue and purple tones (1675, p. 84; reprised in 1679, p. 21). Many other indications were given concerning the stages that needed to be followed in order to paint carnations (Bate, 1634, p. 125 et 155–156; Boutet, 1696 [1672], p. 55–63), the pigments to use for shading (Anonymous, 1688, p. 97), the effects of light and shade (Vinci, 1651, p. 93; Boutet, 1696 [1672], p. 59–63; Watelet, Levesque, 1792, p. 324), or the brushes to use (Boutet, 1696 [1672], p. 21–24).

## Carnation and Decorum

Furthermore, the theoreticians almost all took an interest in the fundamental principle of decorum when it came to treating flesh and carnations. It was thus necessary to distinguish those of a child or a young woman, from those of a shepherd (Van Mander, 1604, fol. 48v–49r). Every individual had to be represented with the carnation that was appropriate, and to do this, it was necessary to take into account the age, gender or social condition (Aglionby, 1685, p. 19; Boutet, 1696 [1672], p. 55–59). It was thus necessary to use “soft colours” (*coloris tendres*) for women and children, blending for example white with blue, whilst this same blue would be proscribed from the carnations of men, for whom vermilion should be used, with the addition of ocre when they were older (Van Mander, 1604, fol. 48v–49r; Boutet, 1696 [1672], p. 55–59; Anonymous, 1688, p. 119; La Fontaine, 1679, p. 79; Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 270–271).

As these rules were general, the most important thing was to observe nature, particularly in the case of portraits, where the artist was led to represent specific, individualised individuals (Boutet, 1696 [1672], p. 55–59). Other theoreticians took up these same indications linked to decorum and specified the pigments that artists should use depending on the person’s skin tone (Salmon, 1672, p. 152; Browne, 1675, p. 81–82; Anonymous, 1688, p. 81 and 96–98; De Lairesse, 1712, p. 36). In addition, these authors recommended using a colour lighter than the person’s real skin tone and then reworking it to gradually reach the real colour (Salmon, 1672, p. 152; Anonymous, 1688, p. 81).

### Natural, *morbidezza* and Mellowness: the Effect of the Carnation

Choosing and arranging the colours of the carnation on the support remained difficult because life and nature had to be apparent (Aglionby, 1685, p. 16–17). The authors thus recommended using natural, vivid and “fresh” tints that did not “*donne[nt] dans la farine*”, that is, colours that were too pale and dull, and unable to bring figures to life (Félibien, *2<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1666, p. 233; Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 227–228; De Piles, 1668, p. 133–135). The carnations in Titian (c. 1488–1576), Rubens (1577–1640) or Van Dyck (1599–1641), who were colourist painters, were frequently cited as the examples to be followed in the treatises of the 17th century, especially because they succeeded in revealing the blood beneath the skin, and disposing colours in a convincing

manner (Félibien, 2<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, 1666, p. 233; Le Blond de la Tour, 1669, p. 46–47; De Piles, 1668, p. 133–135; Aglionby, 1685, p. 18). Given the infinite number of skin tones, this exercise remained difficult. It required as a result long studies of nature, as well as a light brushstroke and an ability to adapt to the variety of carnations.

The Italian terms *morbido* and *morbidezza*, as well as their equivalents in French *moelleux* and *morbidesse*, were often used in relation to colour and the touch of the carnation. Painters thus had to show softness, tenderness and transparency, the contours should not be cut or sliced, but instead present a certain fluidity (*coulant*) (Boutet, 1696 [1672], p. 67–68; Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 248; Dolce, 1735, p. 217, 219, 221; Pernety, 1757, p. 413). To do this, Boutet recommended “mixing the tints with each other” (*mesler ses teintes les unes dans les autres*) so that the drawing would be neither “dry nor hard” (*sec, & dur*) (Boutet, 1696 [1672], p. 67–68). A delicate, soft and mellow brush made it possible to transcribe the effect of roundness and volume in the figures, their gracious aspect and their beauty, as well as the melting of colours (Lacombe, 1752, p. 423; Pernety, 1757; Watelet, Levesque, 1792, p. 483–484).

On the contrary, the way da Vinci treated flesh was criticised by Félibien as he found it overworked and too finished, the flesh “looked like marble” (*semblent de marbre*) (2<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 220–221). Similarly, De Piles denounced the stone-like impression from ancient statues visible in the work of Poussin (1594–1665), which he opposed to the art of Rubens. Rubens effectively succeeded in giving his nudes a flesh-like quality, as well as an impression of “blood-heat” (*chaleur du sang*) (1677, p. 145–146, 257–258 and 260). These remarks hark back to *paragon* or the parallel between painting and sculpture. Diderot also returned to this theme, siding with the former, which was more able to imitate the carnation. According to him, sculpture, which was composed of a “material that is so cold, so refractory, so impenetrable” (*matière si froide, si réfractaire, si impenetrable*) was generally less able to imitate “soft, tender flesh” (*chair douce et molle*) (Diderot, *Salon de 1765* [1996, p. 442]). However, the philosopher admired the talent of sculptors such as Falconet (1716–1791), who were able to transform marble into flesh and give a figure a soft, tender body (particularly in relation to *Pygmalion aux pieds de sa statue à l’instant où elle s’anime*, 1763, Paris; Diderot, *Salon de 1763* [1996, p. 286]). Diderot, like many of his contemporaries, was thus expressing his fascination for the animation of a statue, in which the flesh appeared natural, supple

and alive. The illusion and the impression of life produced by the treatment of the carnation underlined the successful effect of the work, as much as the talent of the artist. These themes are similar to those of the myth of Pygmalion, the artist who brought his sculpture to life, a story that came back into fashion during the 17th and 18th centuries, in both art and literature.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Cartoon ⇒ Copy, Drawing

Charm ⇒ Agreeableness, Grace

## CHIAROSCURO

fr.: *clair-obscur*  
 germ.: *Helldunkel*  
 nl.: *clair-obscur, licht en donker*  
 it.: *chiaroscuro*  
 lat.: *lux et umbra*

**Light (natural and artificial), shadow, monochrome painting, tout-ensemble, accident, *houding*, *Haltung***

*As a concept of pictorial composition, chiaroscuro refers to a contrast that makes use of the disposition of light and dark masses in a picture. The word comes from the Italian chiaroscuro, which was mainly used as a word for monochrome painting, but the two components of the term were also used to signify imitation of light and shadow in a pictorial setting. The elementary function of chiaroscuro is to give an illusion of relief and volume to a figure or an object. The concept was expanded to include compositional aspects in the seventeenth century. Imitation of light phenomena and the understanding of optical principles coexisted with aesthetic principles attached to the concept of chiaroscuro. Eventually, the concept was appreciated solely for its appeal to the senses.*

### From Spatial Illusion to an Aesthetic Quality

The French phrase *clair-obscur* takes its origins from the Italian word *chiaroscuro*, a term used to describe monochrome painting with light and dark tones (Baldinucci, 1681, p. 33). The two words were traditionally associated with the qualities of creating an illusion of relief and enhancing a three-dimensional impression of objects and figures (Cennini, 1970, p. 10–11). The two compounds *chiaro* and *oscuro* were compared to light and shadow in the setting of a picture in early Renaissance writings on art (Alberti, 1973, p. 22, § 9; Vinci, 1651, chap. CXXI, p. 40). The antithetic fusion of the opposite composites was made in the mid-17th century, soon to be adapted into French, and from there into other languages north of the Alps. The term was also used as a technical term for wash drawings on coloured paper, and for woodcuts in imitation of *chiaroscuro* drawings, made with the help of two or more successive blocks.

When the term *clair-obscur* was introduced into French art theory by Roger de Piles in the 17th century, its emphasis shifted towards compositional aspects of arranging light and dark elements in a picture (De Piles 1677, *Termes de peinture par ordre alphabétique*, fols. O2v–O3r). The concept of *chiaroscuro* was stressed as an essential part of painting, as it required the artist to make a choice of which light to employ in which way in his picture. De Piles made a clear distinction between light in nature and “the artifice of *chiaroscuro*” (*l’artifice du Clair-obscur*). Painters should study the behaviour of light in nature such as the incidence of light and its effects on the shadows, but employ their observations in an intentional way in their compositions. The function of *chiaroscuro* was to render a picture in unity, and to create, with the help of contrasting masses, an immediate aesthetic effect on the beholder, the whole-together (*le tout-ensemble*, De Piles, 1708, p. 361–386).

The French concept of *chiaroscuro* was not so much concerned with the singularities of light effects, but rather with the disposition of light and dark masses over the whole of a picture. De Piles suggested three artistic devices by which *chiaroscuro* could be achieved. First, the distribution of objects lit with singular light, connecting with others in order to form general light, as well as singular shadows grouping with others to form shaded masses. To illustrate this compositional aid, De Piles used the well-known metaphor of the bunch of grapes which is composed of many grapes. But they are subordinated in the way in which individual light effects are subordinated to a general light. Secondly, painters could use dark and light colours at will in order to achieve *chiaroscuro*, so taking the liberty of employing artificial colours without having to indicate a reason for their brightness or darkness. And thirdly, painters could make use of accidents, either of light, by which De Piles meant additional light sources, which had to be weaker than the main light employed in the picture, such as windows or flames of artificial light. Accidental shadows could be imagined either as cast by something outside of the picture or by driving clouds over a landscape.

De Piles was the first writer on art to speak of *chiaroscuro* as a major attribute in the discussion of artists and their works. He regarded Rubens as the painter who knew how to employ the effects of *chiaroscuro* most successfully.

### The Terms and Concepts Related to *chiaroscuro*

In 17th-century French art theory, the expression *clair-obscur* was used in parallel with others such as “light and shade” (*la lumière et l’ombre*) or “day and shade” (*les jours et les ombres*). The well-defined concept of *chiaroscuro* soon prevailed. In England, the term in the Italian form and its meaning as monochrome painting was first noted around 1648 in a manuscript that was only accessible to a few (Norgate, 1997, p. 93). In 1693, the word was first discussed in its compositional sense, as “*Chiaro Scuro* - Placing of light” (Smith, 1692, p. 90). In the Netherlands and Germany, the term was not mentioned before the 18th century (Weyerman, 1729, I, p. 25; Hagedorn, 1762, II, p. 641). The German transmission was supplemented with the translation of *Helldunkel*.

Concepts related to aspects of *chiaroscuro* predated the first mentions in these languages. In the Low Countries, the land of Rembrandt and Rubens, expressions such as “*licht en donker*” or “*dag en schaduw*” were frequently used in 17th-century art literature. A related but more-inclusive term was *houding* in Dutch, which was adapted as *Haltung* in German, and used as the translation for the French *clair-obscur* before *Helldunkel* became more common.

Discussions of the concepts related to *chiaroscuro* in Dutch art theory were concerned with different possibilities of grouping light and shade. A particular Dutch form of *chiaroscuro* was the concept of *reddering*, a sequence of alternating contrasts of light and shade. Dutch writers on art were bound to observation of nature more than the French with their emphasis on compositional problems. Discussions of *chiaroscuro* could include epistemological approaches, such as questions of the relative intensity of light and shadows, for example in diagrammatic form with the help of a scale (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 267). A particularly entertaining method of teaching related to *chiaroscuro* was Hoogstraten’s *shadowdance*, a stage play performed by his students in order to study the behaviour of shadows at several distances (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 259-261). Dutch art theory also included practical advice on how to render the features of light and shade with the help of artistic media (De Lairese, 1740 [1712], I, p. 314).

In English art theory, the features of the French concept of *clair-obscur* were discussed more than the term was actually used. Richardson’s discussion of light and dark masses under the heading of composition indicates less interest in actual lighting phenomena (Richardson, 1715, p. 115–124).

### Criticism of *chiaroscuro*

Up to the mid-18th century, the phrase *chiaroscuro* was a specialist term, limited mainly to discussions in art literature. With the emergence of art criticism, the word *chiaroscuro* was used more commonly, and increasingly associated with an artifice of exaggerated natural effects to heighten sentiment. *Chiaroscuro* was labelled “a half-barbaric word” (*un mot moitié barbare*) by Lambert, indicating that in discussions of light and shade scientific cause and aesthetic effect were no longer in connection with one another (Lambert, 1768, p. 45). Talk of the magic of *chiaroscuro* and suggestions to regard it as “a powerful means of attaching the spirit” (*un moyen puissant d’attacher l’esprit*) are examples of the turn towards aesthetical emphasis (Watelet, Levesque, 1792, p. 346). A new attempt to reconcile art and nature in the concept, though entirely removed from the original discussion, could be seen in Constable’s statement made in the early 19th century “that the *chiaroscuro* does really exist in nature” (Constable, 1970, p. 11).

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Alberti, 1435 [1540]; Baldinucci, 1681; Cennini, v. 1400 [1971]; Constable, 1970; Da Vinci, 1651; De Lairese, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1677, 1708; Hagedorn, 1762; Hoogstraten, 1678; Lambert, 1770; Norgate, s.d. v. 1648 [1997]; Richardson, 1715 [1725]; Smith, 1692; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1791; Weyerman, 1729–1769.

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## CHOICE

fr.: *choix*  
 germ.: *Erwählung*  
 nl.: *verkiezing, keur*

**Nature, Antique, beauty, manner, taste, subject, convenience, harmony**

*In the context of imitation of nature, the concept of choice was essential. The anecdote of Zeuxis and the girls of Croton, which has often been cited, was emblematic of what Marsy (1746) called “the beautiful choice” that Bosse (1667, p. 1) associated with good taste. On the other hand, the representation of Ulysses sawing wood for his ship in the presence of Calypso indicated a poor choice (in relation to the Hôtel de Bullion, Marsy, 1746), something that De Piles also criticised in the Flemish painters (De Piles, Remarque 37, 1668, p. 66–70). Choice did not focus only on the subject and the manner of painting. A good choice also revealed the quality of the painters, and bore witness to the “extent of their genius, the nobility of their thought, and their character” (étendue de leur génie, de la noblesse de leurs pensée, de leur caractère, Pernetty, 1757). If the temperament and natural inclination of painters determined the choices, which allowed Audran to affirm that a painter painted himself, thus justifying both the genres and the manners (Audran, 1683, préface), the ease to imprint objects into the imagination and to conceive a history, was also considered to be fundamental for acquiring the freedom to make a good choice (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 287).*

### The Good Choice, between Model and Practice

When De Piles criticised the poor choice of Flemish painters, he cited the fact that they had not seen the ancients, or natural Beauty as it was rare in their country given that they did not know Antiquity, meaning that they could not choose it. Well before they spoke of

instructions for making a choice, theorists debated the models to be followed. Questions could thus be asked regarding the life model (Audran, 1683, préface). As few men had good proportions in all parts, it was necessary, following the example of Zeuxis, to choose in each one what was the most beautiful, what was referred to as beautiful nature, the choice of which required great discernment, that is, an idea of perfection:

It is not a great thing that a Painter imitates objects precisely as he sees them in Nature, they are almost always imperfect and without ornament there. His Art must not serve only to imitate them, but also to choose them well, and it is impossible to choose them well for someone who has no idea of their perfection.

*(C'est tres-peu de chose qu'un Peintre qui imite précisément les objets comme il les voit dans la Nature, ils y sont presque toujours imparfaits & sans ornement. Son Art ne doit pas servir à les imiter seulement, mais à les bien choisir; & il est impossible de les bien choisir qu'il n'ait une idée de leur perfection).*  
(De Piles, 1677, p. 288–289)

Compensating for a defect in natural beauty was also one of the concerns of De Piles, who applied it to different aspects of painting and the different pictorial genres (De Piles, 1708, p. 261, 247–248). The role of the ancient was thus affirmed, serving as model, and developed and acted as the foundation for the judgement of taste, which alone made possible a good choice, through which art could attain perfection (De Piles, 1708, p. 32, 150). But the ancient was also associated with nature:

The True Ideal is a choice of various perfections which are never found in a single model; but which are drawn from several and ordinarily from the Ancient.

*(Le Vrai Ideal est un choix de diverses perfections qui ne se trouvent jamais dans un seul modele; mais qui se tirent de plusieurs & ordinairement de l'Antique).*

(De Piles, 1708, p. 32)

The concept of choice thus appeared to be central for understanding that of imitation, and how it was interwoven with those of beauty and perfection.

In order to choose, it was also essential to see and practice (Bosse, 1667, p. 26). The practice of copying the ancients, given that it played a part in educating the ability to make good choices, was thus justified in a vaster dimension than simple learning by hand. The Dutch theorists,

particularly Goeree, also developed the importance of choice in models, the practice of representing actions (Goeree, 1682, p. 235), as well as copying from the ancients, citing the engravings of Jan de Bisschop (*Signorum Veterum Icones* (1668–1669), Goeree, 1670a, p. 71)

Although French theorists such as Félibien recalled the need to choose what was the most beautiful, and, as we have seen, to choose what was the most perfect (*1<sup>er</sup> Entretien*, 1666, p. 46–47), the search for perfection did not appear to be the only goal. De Piles for example associated choice with the quest for elegance (De Piles, 1708, p. 159–160), leading thus to a change in the paradigm in the relationship with the model. Similarly, by putting forward the different appreciation of men, the northern theorists questioned the definition of beauty (Goeree, 1682, p. 18–19), and, abandoning all reference to Antiquity, questioned the role of ugliness. This led to a different conception of imitation of nature, which thus turned away from the search for an ideal form. Choice focused no longer on perfection, but rather in terms of what was pleasant (Goeree, 1670a, p. 21).

### The Stakes of a Good Choice

In his teachings aimed at young painters, Bosse gave instructions for good choices that focused essentially on elements of history (1667, p. 1). For many theorists, including De Piles, the quality of history effectively consisted first and foremost in the choice of subject (1708, p. 70–71). The question of a beautiful choice was certainly raised in terms of noble subjects, heroic or extraordinary actions when Félibien cited as an example Poussin (1594–1665). The choice of objects to be included in a composition was not only called on to bring value to the genre, it defined the act of inventing (*8<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1685, p. 321–322). The painter acted either through imitation, or through choice (De Piles, 1708, p. 100–101). De Piles effectively gave choice a privileged place in the expression of the subject, alongside faithfulness and clearness in the search for elegance, agreeableness or grace (1708, p. 52–53, 68).

For many theorists, the *good choice* applied essentially to the rendering of the figures, their movements and their actions, which should not exceed the possibilities of nature, be chosen at random, but be in conformity with the composition (Goeree, 1682, p. 287), or, according to *vraisemblance*, with the specific character of each personage from history. For De Piles, this quality was “knowledge [ . . . ] that is the basis for good choice and the source from which one draws the appro-

priate graces for each figure” (*connaissance* [ . . . ] *qui est le fondement du bon choix et la source où l’on puise les graces convenables à chaque figure*, 1708, p. 100–101).

Along with elegance or agreeableness, the other essential issue for choice was the search for decency and variety (De Piles, 1677, p. 262–263). For Restout, this meant for the painter respecting the eurythmy in all parts of the work (1681, p. 126). But choice also extended to the treatment of colours and light:

Thus in a Work of Painting it is absolutely not enough that there be fire and imagination, nor that there be justness in the drawing there; it is necessary that there be much conduct in the choice of the objects, colours and lights, if you want to find in the Paintings, as in Poems, the imitation of Nature accompanied by something surprising and extraordinary; or rather this marvellous and *vraisemblable*, which makes all the beauty of the Painting and Poetry.

(*Ainsi dans un Ouvrage de Peinture ce n’est point assez qu’il y ait du feu & de l’imagination, ny que la justesse du dessin s’y rencontre, il y faut encore beaucoup de conduite au choix des objets, des couleurs & des lumières, si vous desirez qu’on trouve dans les Tableaux comme dans les Poèmes l’imitation de la Nature accompagnée de quelque chose de surprenant & d’extraordinaire; ou plustost ce merveilleux & ce vraisemblable, qui fait toute la beauté de la Peinture & de la Poesie*).

(De Piles, 1677, p. 307–308)

Choice was thus no longer limited to the subject, nor to elegance or agreeableness, it supported the fire, and produced what was surprising and extraordinary, playing a fundamental role in the search for *vraisemblance*, and contributed to a “beautiful *ensemble* and fortunate harmony” (*bel ensemble & une heureuse harmonie*, La Font de Saint Yenne, 1747, p. 86).

Although the term was above all used in French artistic literature, which provided the major development, apart from Goeree, a few northern authors adapted it for other purposes and evoked more the gaze of the spectator. Lairesse thus invited painters to choose whatever flattered the eye, or even to choose the composition in relation to the place in which the painting was to be exhibited (1712, p. 259–260, 363–364).

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Chromatic ⇒ Colour, Colouring

Clearness ⇒ *Réveillon*

Collection ⇒ Gallery

## COLOUR, COLOURING

fr.: *couleur*  
 germ.: *Farbe*  
 nl.: *kleur, verf, couleur*  
 it.: *colore*  
 lat.: *color*

fr.: *colouring*  
 germ.: *Kolorit*  
 nl.: *kleuring, coloriet*  
 it.: *colorito*

**Colour (to), chromatic, union, harmony of colour, friendship, antipathy, pageantry, tinct, tint, tone**

**Simple colour, capital colour, cardinal colour, broken colour, composed colour**

“Colour,” explained Roger De Piles in 1673, “is what makes objects sensitive to vision” (La couleur est ce qui rend les objets sensible à la vue, *De Piles*, 1673, p. 4). A simple, clear and concise definition: it could be tempting to stop this article here. But that would mean glossing a little too quickly over the fact that colour and its corollary colouring account for some of the most debated concepts in the 17th century and the first half of the 18th century in Northern Europe. For the Dutch and German theorists, colouring was judged to be essential for the good conduct of the composition,

*and for many of their French colleagues in the Enlightenment, it was a subject for revitalising the debates on art, and for proposing, through it, a new means of understanding painting.*

### Colour and Colouring in the Art Theory of the Northern Schools

Although it was commonly agreed, as summarised by Samuel van Hoogstraten, that “the art of painting is a science that should make it possible to represent all the ideas or all the concepts that all of visible nature can give us [ . . . ]” (Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 24), “good colouring” (*Wel koloreeren*) alone was perceived as being capable of “revealing [this] nature in a wholly resembling manner” (*de natuer gansch gelijk te schijnen*, Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 217). As a result, the idea put forward by Willem Goeree that colour allowed painting to render nature in a more realistic way than sculpture, which was determined solely by drawing, was to become a *leitmotiv* for the art theorists that defended colouring (Goeree, 1670, p. 25). It was thanks to colour, explained once again the Dutch theorist, that painting became “a living image” (*levende beeld*, Goeree, 1670, p. 25), taking up the postulate of Van Mander who, having compared drawing with the body, and colour with the soul, evoked dead lines that acquired life and movement thanks to colour (Van Mander, 1604, XII, st.1). The German theorist Joachim von Sandrart went further still, considering colour as a thought of the painting, while Van Hoogstraten contented himself with evoking colours that had the power to “move the soul” (*het gemoed te ontroeren*, Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 360).

Painters should thus practise constantly in order to render with their palette the colours of the nature they so admired. Yet this was the hard part. The colours found in nature were not those used by painters, as Sandrart wrote:

But there are in all two sorts of colour. The first is natural, as it is given to each thing, and by which one can differentiate it and recognise it among others [ . . . ]. The second is the one invented by the reason and art of men, through the mixture of the others.

*(Es sind aber ingemein zweyerley Farben. Die erste ist die natürliche/ so einem jeden Ding angeschaffen ist/ worbey man es von andern unterscheidet und kennet. [ . . . ] Die andere/ ist diejenige/ so durch Verstand und Kunst der Menschen/ durch Mischung der andern/ erfunden wird.)*

(Sandrart, 1675, p. 86a)

Yet, while the colours of nature blend and mix into an always harmonious whole, this is not the case of the artificial colours, created by the hand of man. It was necessary to observe that whilst there was a “friendship” between some, others were “unfriendly”, resulting in a subtle game of “correspondences” (*overeenkomst*) and “conflicts” (*strijdicheit*, Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 225). Aristotle’s theory of colours, regenerated in the Renaissance, thus found itself widely brought into question, not to say mocked. Van Hoogstraten thus explained that the theories of Sir Kennelm Digby, claiming that the mixture of white and brown came from red and yellow “would make the colour grinders of Apelles” laugh (*Apelles verwrijvers*, Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 224–225). Opposing a philosophical and an empirical approach, Van Mander, van Hoogstraten and Lairese (Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 222–225 et 267–268, Van Mander, 1604, VII, 23–25, fol 30v–31r, Lairese, 1787, p. 321–335) all insisted on the importance of practice for fully understanding an art as delicate as it was essential of blending colours. Lead white, bone black, yellow ochre, Indian red, green earth or even massicot had to be, according to Van Mander well distributed on the palette, in order to avoid any fateful mixtures, and apprentice painters should be encouraged to practise so as to know “which colours go together willingly” (*wat verwen geern by een zijn*, Van Mander, 1604, VII, 23–25, fol 30v–31r). Only discipline such as this made it possible to produce what Sandrart called either harmony or “*Konkordanz*” (Sandrart, 1675, p. 63–64.) and what Van Hoogstraten called “the art of bouquets” (*tuilkonst*, Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 300).

If they all insisted on this point, it was because the lesson was important: for colour, far from limiting itself to simple visual seduction, participated fully in the successful production of the composition. To the necessary alternation and judicious association of colours with each other, Goeree, Van Hoogstraten, Lairese, or even Sandrart added the value of shade and light, thus further multiplying the chromatic prism into a network of tints and half-tints (also called *mezzotints*), making it possible to create harmony between oppositions and render immediately perceptible to the eye the intelligence of the composition, creating a hierarchy between the different protagonists, modulating the light, even establishing the perspective through what was called degradation of colour, making advances and escapes, contributing by so doing to the intelligibility of the fields and the illusion of space. And Van Hoogstraten explained how mixing “unfriendly” colours,

producing “dirty colours” (*vuile kleur*) or “grey” (*graeuwachticheit*) ones, could be essential for making the background of a composition move into the distance (Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 306). If we add to that the considerable symbolic value given to colours in the Netherlands of the Golden Age (Van Mander, 1604, XIV, 24–27, fol. 54v, Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 221–222 for example), these colours represented as much a feeling (happiness, disappointment in love, hope, fear) as a quality (wisdom, nobility, generosity), when they were not associated with the seasons, or even the gods of ancient mythology, and we can thus understand the extreme richness of this concept within the theory of art in the Northern schools.

The whole was based on a considerable lexical variety, with the Dutch and German theorists using indiscriminately as much the terms colour (*verf, koleur, kleur* in Dutch, *Farbe* in German) and colouring (*kolorijt* in Dutch, *Colorit* in German). This was one point of divergence with their French counterparts, committed to establish a clear distinction between these two concepts.

### Colour and Colouring in France

“There is a great difference between colour and colouring,” (*Il y a une grande différence entre couleur et coloris*) warned Roger De Piles in 1673 in his *Dialogue sur le coloris*, explaining that colouring was the “intelligence” of colours (De Piles, 1673, p. 299–30). Apparently judging that this definition was not explicit enough, he specified in the second edition of the *Dialogue . . .*, in 1699: “Thus Colouring is composed of two things, local colour and *chiaroscuro*” (*Ainsi le Coloris comprend deux choses, la couleur locale & le clair-obscur*, De Piles, 1699a, p. 12). The French theorist thus returned to a definition given by Félibien, for whom the aim of colouring was “colour, light and shade” (*couleur, la lumière & l’ombre*, Félibien, 1676, p. 393–394) but refined it by introducing the term “local colour” (*couleur locale*), which meant “that which is natural to each object” (*celle qui est naturelle à chaque objet*, De Piles, 1699, p. 12). This very specific term was extremely important for making a clear distinction between “colour” and “colouring”. It was used for the first time by the French theorist and then subsequently used as much by Florent le Comte as by Dezallier d’Argenville or even the Abbé de Marsy. The word was furthermore specific to the French language, as seen in this explanation by Johannes Verhoek, the Dutch translator of Roger De Piles: “local colour is an



art term used by the French and that cannot be translated into our language” (*la couleur locale est un terme d’art utilisé par les Français qui ne peut être traduit dans notre langue*, De Piles, 1722, p. 11).

If Roger de Piles took such care with his vocabulary, it was also, and above all, because the question was of importance. Unlike Van Mander, who divided painting into five parts, the French theorists of the modern era divided it into three: composition (also called invention), drawing and colouring (also called chromatics). The order was not chosen by chance: eager to raise painters above the status of mere craftsmen, most of the members of the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, led by Charles le Brun, considered drawing more important than colouring. Drawing was effectively both a matter of practice, proof of the virtuosity of a hand, and intellectual, a projection of the artist’s thoughts and thus of his genius, whilst colouring was merely a seduction of the senses.

The argument may not have been new, having already been active at least during the Renaissance, but it nevertheless provoked a quarrel in 1671 within the Academy, as can be seen in the conferences (in Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I, vol. 1) given by Philippe de Champaigne (June 1671), Gabriel Blanchard (7 November 1671) or Charles Le Brun (9 January 1672). The role played by the writings of Roger de Piles within this quarrel has often been rightly pointed out. By arguing relentlessly in favour of the primacy of colour, he came to embody a form of resistance to the academic dogmas. But it should not be forgotten that in reality, the controversy was present in all writings on painting in the 17th century, starting well before 1671.

From 1666, Félibien was one of those who accused colour of deceiving the spectator by masking any awkwardness in the lines of the drawing:

Whatever beauty in the colouring that a Painter gives to his work, whatever friendship in the colours that he has observed to make it agreeable and pleasant for the view; [ . . . ] if all that is not supported by the drawing, there is nothing, however beautiful and rich it is, that can remain. One must take care above all to not allow oneself to be surprised by the charms of the colouring.

*(Quelque beauté de coloris qu’un Peintre donne à son ouvrage, quelque amitié de couleurs qu’il observe pour le rendre aimable & plaisant à la veüe; [ . . . ] si tout cela n’est soutenu du dessein, il n’y a rien, pour beau & riche qu’il soit, qui puisse subsister. On doit prendre garde sur tout à ne se pas laisser surprendre par les charmes du coloris.)*

(Félibien, 1688, *10<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 289–290)

Hilaire Pader, a few years earlier, shouted down the “idolaters” (*idolastres*) of colour who thus gave “excessive value” (*excessive valeur*) to their paintings (Pader, 1657, p. 8, p. 32). So many warnings that were barely understood by the “modern painters” who, if Fréart de Chambray was to be believed in 1662, “have found themselves a new, coquette and playful mistress who asks for nothing more than pageantry and colours to authorise the first meeting [. . .]” (*se sont fait une nouvelle maîtresse coquette et badine, qui ne leur demande que du fard et des couleurs, pour agréer à la première rencontre [. . .]*, Fréart de Chambray, 1662, preface, np.).

However, from 1668, the translation by Roger De Piles of Dufresnoy’s treatise rang out like a discordant note within this concert of reproaches. Whilst recognising that colouring was a “deceptive beauty” (*beauté trompeuse*), Dufresnoy affirmed that “this prostitution, this make-up and this deception” (*cette prostitution, ce fard & cette tromperie*), far from “dishonouring” it (*deshonor[er]*), had “on the contrary, served more to praise it and reveal its merit” (*au contraire servy qu’à sa loüange, & à faire voir son merite*), adding “that it would be very advantageous to know it” (*qu’il serait très avantageux de la connaître*, Dufresnoy, De Piles, 1668, p. 27–28). His translator, Roger De Piles, took advantage of this to slip into the text in brackets that it was “the soul and ultimate achievement of Painting” (*l’âme & le dernier achèvement de la Peinture*), an argument he returned to in 1677, affirming in turn that “the soul of Painting is Colouring. The soul is the final perfection of what is living, and what gives it life” (*l’ame de la Peinture est le Coloris. L’ame est la derniere perfection du vivant, & ce qui luy donne la vie*, De Piles, 1677, p. 272). Far from allowing himself to be impressed by Academy members Charles Le Brun and Philippe de Champaigne and their undeniable talent, De Piles explained on the contrary that he understood where their “indifference” came from. It was that, compared to drawing, colouring, he admitted, “is an extremely difficult thing” (*est une chose fort difficile*):

drawing has rules based on proportions, on Anatomy and on continuous experience of the same thing: whereas Colouring has no well-established rules, and the experience that one makes of it, as it is almost always different because of the different subjects that are treated, has not been able to establish any precise ones.

*(le dessein a des règles fondées sur les proportions, sur l’Anatomie & sur une expérience continue de la mesme chose: au lieu que le Coloris n’a point encore de règles bien connus, & que l’expérience qu’on y fait, estant*

*quasi toujours différente, à cause des differens sujets que l'on traite, n'a pû encore en établir de bien précises.)* (De Piles, 1673, p. 50)

A further step was taken in 1708, when he affirmed that in the end, drawing “consists only in a habit of measurements and outlines” (*ne consiste que dans une habitude des mesures et des contours*) while “colour is continuous reasoning, which is exercised by genius” (*la couleur est un raisonnement continuel, qui exerce le genie*, De Piles, 1708, p. 17–18). The French theorist thus completely inverted the value system that claimed that only drawing came from the mind and reason of the painter, whilst colour was merely the work of practitioners and deception. For De Piles, colouring encapsulated its own intelligence and its own reflections: far from being based on a “medley of different colours” (*bigarure de couleurs différentes*) it proceeded from the reasoning of the artist, aiming for “their just distribution” (*leur juste distribution*, De Piles, 1699a, p. 11). If “it is easy to see that what has the most part in the effect that calls out to the Spectator” (*il est aisé de voir que ce qui a le plus de part à l'effet qui appelle le Spectateur*), it was necessary to recognise that “without the intelligence of *Chiaroscuro*, and all that depends on Colouring, the other parts of Painting lose much of their merit” (*sans l'intelligence du Clair-obscur, & de tout ce qui dépend du Coloris, les autres parties de la Peinture perdent beaucoup de leur mérite*, De Piles, 1708, p. 19–20, p. 13–14). La Font de Saint-Yenne did not understand it in any other way, taking care to warn the public attending the Salon, “One must not believe that this high intelligence in Colouring, and this artifice of seduction is easy” (*Il ne faut pas croire que cette haute intelligence du Coloris, & cet artifice de séduction soit aisé*, La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747, p. 92–93).

It was thus that started to emerge in France, following on from Roger de Piles, the idea according to which colouring, far from being the simple “pageantry” (*fard*) could, on the contrary formed the central pillar of composition and, as a result of this, even reflected the virtuosity of a painter’s invention. As the only thing capable of perfectly imitating nature, it also made it possible to structure the composition, conserving advances and escapes, focusing on one character when another was in the shade, creating lines of forces, allowing the painter to guide the spectator’s gaze and lead it wherever he wanted. Dezallier, returning to one of the arguments from De Piles, thus explained that “chromatics or colouring produce these beautiful effects of *chiaroscuro* which moves the different parts of a painting backwards and forwards,

and puts the figures into relief” (*la chromatique ou coloris produit ces beaux effets du clair-obscur qui fait avancer ou reculer les parties d’un tableau, & donne du relief aux figures*, Dezallier, 1745, p. 4).

The concepts of “natural colours” (*couleurs naturelles*), “artificial” colours (*artificielles*), with “friendship” or “antipathy” (*l’amitié, l’antipathie*), so important for the theorists from the Northern schools in the 17th century could also be found in Florent Le Comte, Dezallier d’Argenville or Marsy. It was explained how to distribute correctly the pigments on the palette so as to obtain good “broken colours” (*couleurs rompues*), in other words the right mixture of two colours, and thus avoid an unfortunate combination that would lead to a deplorable “economy of colours” (*oeconomie des couleurs*), or their just distribution on the canvas (De Piles, 1684, p. 40–41, Le Comte, 1699, p. 51). Paintings were thus frequently compared to an orchestra where, like musicians, each colour had to take its role and play its part so as to generate an “agreement” and a “union” of the colours and thus contribute to “the harmony of the whole” (*l’harmonie du tout-ensemble*). In this sense, the paintings of Rubens (1577–1640) were cited by De Piles as the absolute model.

Coypel, in 1732, may have tried hard to delay things by arguing that painting was composed of so many parts that it was impossible to focus on them all at once (Coypel, 1732, p. 2–3), but the desire of Roger de Piles to win art lovers over to his cause prevailed in the first half of the 18th century. It was indeed the “striking nature of the Colouring” (*le frappant du Coloris*) that, if Baillet de Saint-Julien is to be believed, “made the painting of Medea by Jean-François de Troy the favourite over all others” (*a fait préférer le tableau de la Médée de Jean-François de Troy à tous les autres*) for the public at the Salon of 1748. (Baillet de Saint-Julien, 1750, p. 22)

One should nevertheless not believe that the artists that favoured colouring over drawing found themselves exempt of all reproach. While colouring and the mastery of colour had the power to demonstrate the genius of a painter, they could also, by the same token, reveal any failings. The inventiveness of the language that came to light in French texts from the first half of the 18th century indirectly betrayed this new appetite for colour and the description of its effects. If one used the brush awkwardly, the colour “bled” (*bavoche*), if one neglected the intelligence of colours, he is a “dyer” (*teinturier*), if one used colours that were too pale, they “produced a floury result” (*donne dans la*

*farine*), or if colours were too artificial, they “smelled of the palette” (*sentiront la palette*). And yet, if one succeeded in producing “flesh that looks like flesh” (*la chair qui ressemble à de la chair*), with the artificial colours perfectly imitating the natural colours, in that case, one would be able to say “boldly” (*hardiment*), like Coypel, “that is something that has been well coloured!” (*voilà qui est bien colorié!*, Coypel, 1732, p. 33).

Aude PRIGOT

[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Baillet De Saint-Julien, 1750; Conférences [2006-2015]; Coypel, 1732; De Lairese, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1668, 1677, 1684, 1699, 1708; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1752; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Goeree, 1670 a; Hoogstraten, 1678; La Font De Saint-Yenne, 1747; Le Comte, 1699–1700; Marsy, 1746; Pader, 1653 [1657]; Sandrart, 1675 et 1679; Van Mander, 1604.

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## COMPOSITION

fr.: *composition*  
 germ.: *Komposition, Zusammensetzung*  
 nl.: *compositie, ordonnantie, opmaeckinge, samenschikking*  
 it.: *componimento*  
 lat.: *compositio*

**Invention, disposition, distribution, ordinance, economy, whole together, part of painting**

*Composition, which, in the rhetoric, played only a local role as the organisation of words (collocatio), became a fundamental component in the treatises on painting from 1650 onwards by annexing two fields: that of invention and that of the disposition that it bound. The authors in the 1670s, including Félibien, gave primacy to invention, as both design (idea of the conception of the history) and drawing (the organisation of the figures on the painting). Perrault and the artists of the Académie insisted more on the disposition, because of their interest in the whole or the effect of the painting on the spectator. Roger de Piles followed Félibien's convenient three-way scheme (composition, drawing, colour as parts of the painting), but in granting considerable importance to disposition in the composition. Because of the clarity and logic of his discourse (and its aesthetic issues, with primacy for the effect of the painting) the same conception was reused in the 18th century.*

### From Rhetoric to Painting

The term composition was quite absent from the first text in France, *L'idée de la perfection de la peinture*, by Roland Fréart de Chambray. The author, using as his base the model from Antiquity transmitted by Junius, identified five parts in painting:

the Invention or History, Proportion or Symmetry, Colour, which also includes the just arrangement of light and shade; Movements, in which are expressed Actions and Passions; and finally Collocation, or the regular Position of the Figures in the Work as a whole.

*(l'Invention ou l'Histoire, la Proportion, ou la Symetrie, la Couleur, laquelle comprend aussi la iuste dispensation des lumières et des ombres; les Mouvements, où sont exprimées les Actions et les Passions; et enfin la Collocation, ou Position régulière des Figures en tout l'Ouvrage.)*

(Fréart de Chambray, 1662, p. 10)

The term composition was used in this text with a common meaning, frequently cited in dictionaries: a work of the mind that one has composed. However, from 1700, composition became one of the three main parts of painting, alongside drawing and colour.

The term effectively came to reunite two concepts that Junius had designated with two different names: the *collocatio* (the installation of the words or ideas, which thus applied to the figure, as attested by Van Mander [1604, V, 3–4, 15r-15v.]) and *dispositio*, or the order (the arrangement of the figures and the parts) and disposition.

Leonardo Da Vinci's *Traité de la peinture*, nevertheless translated by the same Fréart de Chambray, was the first text in French to give semantic importance to the term composition, and to give it this double meaning: "The first study of the compositions of histories must start by bringing together a few lightly sketched figures" (*La première étude des compositions d'histoires doit commencer par mettre ensemble quelques figures légèrement esquissées*, 1651, chap. LXXXXVI, p. 30); "The highest and main part of art is the invention of compositions in whatever subject can exist" (*Le comble et la principale partie de l'art est l'invention des compositions en quelque sujet que ce puisse estre*, 1651, chap. CLXXXII, p. 59). The sense of assembly (which returns to the idea of composition in rhetoric, or *collocation*) was the most frequently used, for example by Pader (1649, p. 3–4). Boileau used it in this restricted sense, even if he made it one of the five sources of greatness, "it is the Composition and arrangement of the words in all their magnificence and their dignity" (*c'est la Composition & l'arrangement des paroles dans toute leur magnificence & leur dignité*, 1674, p. 16–17). But different authors soon gave it a meaning similar to that of disposition. Bosse, in 1667, associated it with invention or history ("composition or invention of different objects" (*composition ou invention de différents objets*) and "composition of history" (*composition d'histoire*, 1667, p. 18–19 and 24). Roger de Piles, in his commentary of Dufresnoy which was published a year later, associated *collocatio* (particular) and *dispositio* (general) (Dufresnoy/de Piles, 1668, p. 77). Le Blond de La Tour too, gave it a strong sense of organisation of ideas on paper (1669, p. 32–33), a meaning that became common in the Netherlands, in association with the design/drawing (Goere, 1670b, p. 76; Lairesse, 1706, p. 29, with greater importance given to the organisation of the action). This meaning was found again a few years later in the dictionaries: "One of the parts of painting which consists in executing the design that one has formed" (*Une des parties de la peinture qui consiste à exécuter le dessein qu'on s'est formé*, Richelet, 1680, entry composition).

### Composition, between Invention and Disposition

Félibien was thus able to give a global meaning to composition, including invention and disposition (“the composition, which some also call Invention, includes the distribution of the figures in the Painting” (*la composition, que quelques uns nomment aussi Invention, comprend la distribution des figures dans le Tableau*, 1676, p. 393-394). But there nevertheless remained a certain vagueness. *Compositio* effectively included *Inventio* and corresponded to all the intellectual parts of artistic creation, which Félibien opposed to “Design” and colouring, which “regarded only practice, and belonged to the craftsman” (*ne regardent que la pratique, et appartiennent à l’ouvrier*, 1666, 1<sup>er</sup> Entretien, p. 45–46). This appropriation was a means for the secretary of the Académie royale to affirm that painting was indeed a “*cosa mentale*”, and to claim for the painter the work of imagination and conception, which could previously be the domain of the patron or scholar, whereas the Académie claimed a liberal status for painting. But this intellectual aspect also included disposition, that is knowing how to express one’s ideas on paper. The definition given in the work *Des principes de l’architecture, de la sculpture, de la peinture* was thus extremely broad and covered both the instant of invention and that of execution:

The Composition that some also call Invention includes the distribution of the Figures in the Painting; the choice of the attitudes; the arrangement of the Draperies; the decency of the ornaments; the situation of the places; the buildings; the landscapes; the various expressions of the movements of the body, and the passions of the soul, and finally all that the imagination can form, and that cannot be imitated from nature.

*(La Composition que quelques-uns nomment aussi Invention, comprend la distribution des Figures dans le Tableau; le choix des attitudes; les accomodemens des Draperies; la convenance des ornemens; la situation des lieux; les bastimens; les païsages; les diverses expressions des mouvemens du corps, & les passions de l’ame, & enfin tout ce que l’imagination se peut former, & qu’on ne peut pas imiter sur le naturel.)*

(Félibien, 1676, p. 393)

Bernard Dupuy du Grez resumes the extensive idea of composition, dividing it in three parts: invention, ordonnance or disposition and convenience (1699, p. 284–285).



### Composition and Disposition: the Effect of the Whole

In the last quarter of the 17th century, Testelin and Perrault were less concerned about the heritage of the ancient subdivisions of rhetoric, then about the success of the painter or the modernity of painting. They thus played a part in enriching what was evoked by the term composition. For Perrault, composition was necessarily linked to the new concept of the whole. It thus contained very technical elements—the judicious assembly of the figures, the “weakening of the light and shade” (*l'affaiblissement des ombres et des lumières*), the gradation of colours, and came after drawing (“the outline of the figures” (*le contour des figures*)) and the expression of passions possessed by the Ancients. This “after” also referred to historical modernity: only the painters of Louis XIV mastered “this third aspect of painting, which concerns the composition of a painting” (*cette troisième partie de la peinture qui regarde la composition d'un tableau*, Perrault, 1688, p. 209–211). Testelin did not really say anything else, but used more technical terms and took greater care to be able to include Poussin among the Moderns and the *exempla*. As a painter, he laid down as the first principle the success of painting through its ability to mark he who regarded it: “the Painter must so subjugate all the parts that enter into the composition of his Painting that they work together to form a just idea of the subject, in such a way that they might inspire in the spirit of those who regard it the emotions that are appropriate for this idea” (*le Peintre doit tellement assujettir toutes les parties qui entrent en la composition de son Tableau, qu'elles concourent ensemble à former une juste idée du sujet, en sorte qu'elles puissent inspirer dans l'esprit des regardans des émotions convenables à cette idée*, Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 19). He provided certain technical methods for succeeding in this (a certain “variety in the contrasts” (*variété de contrastes*) or not failing (“avoid showing together incompatible things” (*éviter de faire paraître ensemble des choses incompatibles*)), which corresponded to decency). To illustrate this union of the plastic whole with decency for the unity of the subject, Testelin referred to a painting by Poussin, *Eliezer and Rebecca* (1648, Paris, musée du Louvre). This commentary remains the theory of *modes* that was explicitly mentioned at the end of the analysis (Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 20–21).

Roger de Piles, in *Idée du peintre parfait* published as an introduction to his *Abrégé de la vie des peintres* (1st edition 1699), succeeded in reconciling the latter approach with the discourse of Félibien. He

took from Félibien the organisation of the painting into three parts: composition, drawing and colouring (1715, p. 28), and divided the composition into invention and disposition. But whereas for Félibien, the invention, the intellectual part, took precedence, and the disposition put the ideas into place, for Roger de Piles, the two parts could not be dissociated. The disposition was essential, for it was the expression of the subject and that which made it possible to produce an effect that was fundamental:

the Composition contains two things, Invention and Disposition. Through Invention, the Painter must find and bring into his subject the most appropriate objects for expressing it and decorating it; and through the Disposition, he must situate them in the most advantageous Manner so as to obtain the greatest effect, and please the eyes, by showing the beautiful parts.

*(La Composition contient deux choses, l'Invention & la Disposition. Par l'invention, le Peintre doit trouver & faire entrer dans son sujet les objets les plus propres à l'exprimer & à l'orner: & par la Disposition il doit les situer de la Manière la plus avantageuse, pour en tirer un grand effet, & pour contenter les yeux, en faisant voir de belles parties.)* (1715, p. 3)

The disposition thus included the contrasts and links between the figures for, according to the principle of the whole, it was not only the unity of subject that was necessary, but also a unity of group through the *chiaroscuro*, on the model of the bunch of grapes. This statement of the superiority of the part played by disposition in the composition was reinforced in the *Cours de peinture par principe* in 1708. This time, the disposition referred to a political model and guaranteed the *docere* and *delectare*:

the economy and good order is what gives all the worth, that which in the *beaux arts* catches our attention, and which keeps our mind fixed until it is full of things that in a Work may instruct and please at the same time.

*(L'œconomie & le bon ordre est ce qui fait tout valoir, ce qui dans les beaux Arts attire notre attention, & ce qui tient notre esprit attaché jusqu'à ce qu'il soit rempli des choses qui peuvent dans un Ouvrage & l'instruire, & lui plaire en même tems)* (1708, p. 94–95)

It was now divided into six parts, the last of which was the principle and objective: that is the disposition of the objects in general, the groups, the choice of attitudes, the contrast, how the draperies fell, and the effect of the whole. The use and compatibility of all these

different parts with a type of subject formed “a style” that was not far from that of Poussin. Furthermore, and intelligently, Roger de Piles took as an illustration of this last point the heroic style, and cited the example of Poussin. However, he warned those who wanted to imitate Poussin of the risk of failure and of falling into what he called puerility (1708, p. 202), and above all developed on the subject of this style a conception of painting (“an agreeable illusion, a sort of enchantment” (*une agréable illusion, un espèce d’enchantement*) opposed to that of Poussin.

The clarity and logic in the discourse of Roger de Piles meant that he was cited by most theorists. A painter such as Antoine Coypel agreed with him that the composition included invention and disposition, and included thus the disposition of groups, contrasts, and light (1732, p. 29–30). A scholar such as Jean-Baptiste Du Bos gave even greater importance to the disposition part of invention. He effectively distinguished three major registers, the heroic, picturesque and poetic styles, with for each a general effect of the painting guaranteed by a unity of invention (and thus of subject) and an agreement between the subject and the disposition (Du Bos, 1740, p. 262–263). But even before these two texts, Jonathan Richardson (1725, p. 117–118) had pushed Roger de Piles’ reasoning to its limits on the subject of the link between composition, whole and effect, citing as examples of good composition to be studied not Poussin, but Raphael (1483–1520) and . . . Rubens (1577–1640) or Rembrandt (1606–1669).

Olivier BONFAIT

[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Boileau, 1674a; Bosse, 1667; Coypel, 1732; Da Vinci, 1651; De Lairese, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1708, De Piles, 1715; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; Goeree, 1668 [1670 b]; Le Blond De La Tour, 1669; Perrault, 1688–1697; Richardson, 1715 [1725]; Richelet, 1680; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Van Mander, 1604.

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Conception  $\implies$  Idea

Concord  $\implies$  Harmony (of colours), Union

## CONNOISSEUR/LOVER OF ART

fr.: *amateur, connoisseur, curieux*

germ.: *Liebhhaber*

nl.: *liefhebber, kunsthebber, kunstminaar, kunst-lievende man*

it.: *virtuosi*

lat.: *amator*

**Admirer, beholder, collector, critic, curious, knowing men, spectator, judgement, knowledge, taste**

One is a connoisseur through learning, an art lover through taste, and curious through vanity.

*(On est connoisseur par étude, amateur par goût, & curieux par vanité.)*

(WATELET et LEVESQUE, 1792, I, p. 552)

*Contrary to the definition given by Watelet and Levesque at the end of the 18th century, the distinction between the figures of art lover, curious and connoisseur were not without ambiguity in the texts on art theory in the 17th and 18th centuries. The terminology used to designate he who showed an interest in art, regardless of his motivations, was particularly rich, above all in France. This search for increasingly precise vocabulary by the theorists showed the interest and care they took in defining the figure of the ideal art lover, capable of understanding, appreciating and judging works.*

## Curious, Art Lover, Connoisseur and Collector

### *A Common Taste for Art*

Whereas Marsy associated the figure of the art lover solely with painting (1746, I, p. 11), in the treatises on theory in both the 17th and 18th centuries, the term referred more generally to anyone with a certain inclination for art in general, including sculpture, painting, engraving, drawing or architecture. This propensity extended like an attachment, a quality (Bosse, 1667, *dédicace*), or, more broadly speaking, an affection for art, in a sense that also covered the terms of *amateur*, *liefhebber*, *konst-lievende man*, and *kunstminaar* in Dutch, or *Liebhhaber* in German. In France, the terminology of the art lover was richer and much more difficult to pin down. Whilst the terms *curieux*, *amateur* and *connoisseur* were used without any real distinction between them in the 17th century to designate he who showed a particular interest in art, thus referring back to the concept of taste (Félibien, 7<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, 1685; Perrault, 1688; Du Bos, 1719; Dezallier D'Argenville, 1745–1752, I; Marsy, 1746; La Font de Saint Yenne, 1747), the respective meanings were refined but were not fixed until the middle of the 18th century.

### *Attachment to the Object*

Possession of an object did not influence the definition of art lover, but rather that of those who were curious. The theorists thus referred to the “studios for the curious” (*cabinets des curieux*) to designate those who collected (Le Comte, 1699–1700, I, p. 159–160), “liked paintings to look at” (*ayment les tableaux pour les voir*, Bosse, 1649, p. 17) or to decorate their apartments (Le Comte, 1699, p. 159). The collection was considered to be an ornament (Junius, 1638, p. 8; Bosse, 1649, p. 17; Le Comte, 1699–1700, I, p. 159–160), even becoming part of the furnishings (Richardson, 1728, p. 116). This type of curious person only attributed to the collection a material value, considering the objects only in relation to their “price, rarity and genealogy” (*prix, la rareté & la généalogie*, Perrault, 1688–1697, I, p. 241–242; Coypel, 1732, p. 26). The rarity criterion, which sometimes came under the “princely spirit” (*l'esprit princier*, Peacham, 1661, p. 104–105), could define the very concept of curiosities (Marsy, 1746, I, p. 173). The works were thus only considered through the prism of the “reputation of their authors” (*réputation de leurs auteurs*, Félibien, 1666, p. 223–224; Hoogstraten, 1678, n.p.; Richardson, 1728, tome II, p. 8), the curi-

ous person, the “buyer of names” (*naemkoopers blijven*, Hoogstraten, 1678, n.p.), willingly giving in to fashions (Fréart, 1662, p. 120; De Lairese, 1738, p. 134; Perrault, 1688, préface n.p; Caylus, 1748, cited in Lichtenstein and Michel, t. V, vol. 1, p. 196–205). Certain authors from the 18th century thus associated this love of art with a social practice of representation in relation to one’s milieu (Richardson, 1728, p. 116), making it possible to “give oneself an air of ability” (*donner un air de capacité*, Coypel, 1732, p. 24). It was precisely this figure that was denigrated as much by the art theorists as by the philosophers. What was criticised was their love, which came from idleness (Junius, 1638, p. 81), passion (Perrault, 1688, p. 241–242; Bosse, 1667, *dédicace*, n.p.), or even mania (Bosse, 1649, p. 3): this sterile affectation was thus considered to be a “ridiculous pastime” (*passé-temps ridicule*, Hoogstraten, 1678, n.p.; Coypel, 1732, p. 18), a form of entertainment (Junius, 1641, p. 67) or an “amusement” (Caylus, 1748). The theoretical texts and specialised dictionaries from the middle of the 18th century (Marsy, 1746, I, p. 173; Caylus, 1748; Pernety, 1757, p. 122; Lacombe, 1766, p. 209; Watelet-Levesque, 1788–1791, p. 551) generalised this meaning of the term, referring to an attachment that was purely material, but the term *curieux* did not systematically have this pejorative connotation in the 17th century and designated first of all the field of art lovers.

“Being an Art Lover without Being a Connoisseur” (*Être amateur sans être connoisseur*)

The controversy with regard to the curious figure also applied to that of the art lover. Through the theoretical texts, the authors took pains to establish the portrait of the ideal art lover, thus bringing to light a hierarchy between *curious*, the *art lovers* and *connoisseurs*, based on different criteria. Although these criteria could be of a financial nature, thus raising questions about the mechanisms of the art market (Peacham, 1634, p. 2–4; Le Comte, 1699–1700, I, p. 159), the distinction was made above all with regard to the practice and even knowledge of the art lover. There was thus praise for the figure of the learned man and curious practitioner (Bosse, 1649, p. 71–73; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 2; De Lairese, 1738, p. 178) as opposed to those who were “ignorant” (Félibien, *2<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1666, p. 191–192; Perrault, 1688–1697, I, p. 241–242; De Piles, 1708, p. 263; Coypel, 1732, p. 26; Du Bos, 1740, p. 333). A distinction also emerged in the epithets used

by the authors for the terms *curieux*, *art lover* or *connoisseur*. Those who were “truly” curious (*les vrais curieux*, Junius, 1641, p. 68; Bosse, 1649, p. 73) such as the “learned” (*ççavant*) art lover (Perrault, 1688, préface, n.p.; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Coypel, 1732, p. 18), *werlick gheleert* (Junius, 1641, p. 348), *oprecht Lief-hebber* [the honest art lover] (Junius, 1641, p. 52), *vernuftig liefhebber* [the ingenious art lover] (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 35) or the “judicious, enlightened connoisseurs” (*connoisseurs judicieux, éclairés*, La Font de Saint Yenne, 1747, p. 3) were thus opposed to the “curious with little knowledge” (*curieux peu connaissant*, Bosse, 1649, p. 84), the “semi-connoisseurs” (*demi connoisseurs*, De Piles, 1708, p. 26–27; Dezallier D’Argenville, 1745–1752, I, p. XXXI–XXXII), the “mediocre connoisseurs” (*connoisseurs Médiocres*, Du Bos, 1740, p. 394), the “false” (*faux*) and “so-called” (*prétendus*) connoisseurs (Restout, 1681, p. 11; Coypel, 1732, p. 27) or even the uneducated art lovers (*ongheleerden Konst-liever*, Junius, 1641, p. 348). This diversity also showed that the figures of the art lover, those who were curious, and the connoisseur were still not clearly defined, to the extent that the theorists sometimes praised those who were curious, sometimes the art lovers and sometimes the connoisseurs, on the only condition that they be educated. This position was confirmed in the first half of the 17th century: the authors defended a know-how specific to the art lover, and took pains to describe the characteristics of it in their works. They thus brought the ideal figure of the lover of art, and more generally of the arts, into the field of knowledge. In the face of the simple possession of the object, knowledge effectively brought legitimacy to the role of the connoisseur compared to that of the art lover, a term which globally designed he who liked the arts: “One can hardly be a connoisseur without being an art lover, but one can be an art lover without being a connoisseur” (*On n’est guères connoisseur, sans être Amateur, mais on peut être Amateur, sans être connoisseur*, Marsy, 1746, I, p. 141).

### Towards a Definition of a Science of the Connoisseur

From the 17th century, theorists questioned the figure of the curious person in relation to that of the connoisseur: although they had in common a love for the arts, the respectable art lover distinguished himself through his knowledge of art. He thus acquired the merit of being referred to as a *connoisseur*, *connaissant* or *clairvoyant*, all expressions that found their equivalent in the Dutch terms *kunstkenner*,

*kunst-vroede*, or *virtuosi* in Italian. In English, the theoretical texts from the 17th century used more generic terms, such as *man of understanding* (Junius, 1638, p. 329), *knowing* (De Lairese, 1738, p. 178) before assimilating the French term, *connoisseur*, which, for Richardson, was better suited to designating the man who liked a painting and was familiar with it (1719, p. 62–64), bringing the concept closer to that of critic or judge (Chambers, 1728, n.p.). The authority of this type of art lover was based on his knowledge, acquired first through reading the same treatises on theory which established the “real rules on which practice must be founded” (*véritables règles sur lesquelles la pratique doit estre fondée*, Bosse, 1667, dédicace, n.p.). This search for the ideal art lover ultimately made it possible for art theorists to bring legitimacy to their own works. The theoretical texts thus may have delayed defining the knowledge necessary for understanding the arts and, in this sense, they sometimes addressed their texts directly to art lovers through the dedication (Restout, 1681; Bosse, 1649; Sandrart, 1675; Goeree, 1670; De Lairese, 1701; Baillet de SaintJulien, 1750). The art lover could also be the very heart of their writings: Caylus made them the subject of a conference presented to the Academy in 1748, whilst Richardson addressed them a long discourse defending the *science of a connoisseur* (Richardson, 1719). This work thus focused on defending the knowledge of the art lover, knowledge that played a part in creating the reasoned science of the connoisseur, or at least a reasoned approach to the work, which was based on a method, analysis criteria, a certain technicity of the eye, and the practice of comparison.

Bookish knowledge, based on the theoretical treatises as well as on the lives of artists, made it possible for connoisseurs to understand the principles of art, to better understand the terminology of art, all whilst discovering the names of artists, their history and their works. But this theoretical knowledge was not enough to become a fine connoisseur (Coypel, 1732, p. 18–19). The visual and manual experience turned out to be as essential, focusing the science of the connoisseur on empirical practice, based on the paradigm of experimentation. From the 17th century, theorists were in agreement to say that good training first made it necessary to educate the regard, through scrupulous and regular observation of works (Junius, 1645, p. 344; De Piles, 1708, p. 399; De Piles, 1715, p. 72–73). On the strength of his knowledge, the connoisseur then brought a new way of looking at works, a *keurig* og [judicious eye] (De Lairese, 1701, p. 47), a *Konst-gheleerd oogh* [an educated eye] (Junius, 1641, p. 65), a way of looking that needed to



be more and more thought-out cerebrally. Although the conditions under which the paintings were regarded was theorised by Roger de Piles (1677, p. 299–301), in the 18th century, the eye was able to implement a real analysis system. When faced with the work, for Richardson (1728, p. 30) the connoisseur was obliged to regard the work with method, first from a distance, then from closer in, taking notes so as to apply to it the balance system of painters, using the model established by Roger de Piles in 1708. Memory and imagination were qualities that were just as necessary for the connoisseur for Junius, Angel or Richardson. The connoisseur would then be able to compare works, a skill emphasised by Bosse (1649, p. 27) and also defended by the theorists of the 18th century (Du Bos, 1719; Caylus, 1748): comparing works made it possible to make “a habit, a clear and distinct idea of the nature and practice of each painter” (*une habitude, une idée nette & distincte du caractère & de la pratique de chaque peintre*, Dezallier D’Argenville, 1745–1752, I, p. XXIII). Studying and experience were thus the primary attributes of the real connoisseur (Bosse, 1649, p. 26–27; De Piles, 1677, p. 18; Restout, 1681, p. 70; Perrault, 1688, p. 238–240; De Piles, 1715, p. 97). From then on, the connoisseur was understood to be a practitioner (Bosse, 1649), although this term acquired a more specific meaning at the end of the 17th century. Effectively, the practice of drawing was first of all simply recommended for the shrewd art lover in English or Dutch theory (Peacham, 1634, p. 2; Junius, 1641, p. 29; Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 35), before becoming a skill necessary for the very definition of connoisseur in the French texts on art theory (Boutet, 1696, p. 131–132; De Piles, 1715, p. 93; Du Bos, 1740, p. 340; Dezallier D’Argenville, 1745–1752, I; Caylus, 1748). Practice and study thus played a part in “training the taste” (*former le gout*) of the connoisseur (Dezallier D’Argenville, 1745–1752, I, p. p. XXXIII).

### The Connoisseur, the Tutelary Figure of Art

#### *Towards Technical Expertise*

Although knowledge defined the good art lover, it also made it possible to stand out on three levels. The theory texts attribute a first quality to the connoisseur: the ability for attribution. While Junius defended the ability to distinguish ancient works from modern ones (Junius, 1641, p. 345), the theorists focused above all on describing this capacity of the connoisseur to recognize the manner specific to

each painter, both in the 17th (Bosse, 1649; Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 196; Félibien, *6<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1679, p. 646; Félibien, *10<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1688, p. 293; Le Comte, 1699–1700, I, p. 159) and 18th centuries (De Piles, 1715, p. 97; Perrot, 1725, p. XXVI; Du Bos, 1740; Dezallier D'Argenville, 1745–1752, I, p. XXXIII-XXXIV) raising questions about the value of the signature as much as that of the status or quality of the work. The skills associated with the attribution and authentication of works was part of the context of the art market: the connoisseur would thus avoid being “deceived” (*trompé*, La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648, p. 103–104; Bosse, 1649, p. 17–18; Hoogstraten, 1678, introduction, n.p.; Richardson).

### *The Connoisseur as Adviser and Judge*

Beyond the material considerations of the works that assimilated the connoisseur with an expert, the theorists agreed that the enlightened art lover had the power to judge a work and this, as early as the 17th century. Da Vinci, Van Mander, Junius, Dufresnoy or Sandrart thus mentioned the connoisseur's judgement once a work was completed, as the painter was no longer capable of judging his own work. In this sense, the enlightened art lover was the artist's favoured contact, providing advice, a position defended by Coppel in 1730 or Caylus in 1748. Nevertheless, the worthy art lover was obliged to not be malicious according to Junius (1641, p. 68), offering a judgement that was “sane” (*sain*) according to De Piles (1677, p. 18) and an “enlightened sentiment” (*sentiment éclairé*, Caylus, 1748). Contrary to those who were ignorant and who took an interest primarily in the names or history of a work, sensitive experience, supported by knowledge, was what was important in a connoisseur, who could then judge the “intrinsic value of the work” (*valeur intrinsèque de l'ouvrage*, Dezallier D'Argenville, 1745–1752, I, p. XXXI). It was his knowledge that allowed him to consider the “merits” (*mérites*) of a work (Félibien, *2<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1666, p. 181; Perrault, 1688, p. 241–242; Du Bos, 1740, p. 333-335). He alone was able to feel and recognise beauty according to Junius (1641, p. 260), La Mothe le Vayer (1648, p. 104) or Bosse (1649, p. 65), a quality that was also recognised by Dezallier D'Argenville in the deserving connoisseur: “Through fortunate comparisons, through penetration of the spirit, through a strong inclination, one is trained in great taste and a just idea of true beauty” (*Par d'heureuses comparaisons, par une pénétration d'esprit, par une forte inclination, on se forme un grand goût, & une juste idée du vrai*

*beau*, Dezallier D'Argenville, 1745–1752, I, p. XXII). Being aware of what perfection in art consisted of, and not stopping at the “surface of things” (*superficie des choses*, Félibien, 2<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, 1666, p. 191–192), the connoisseur had to be able to read the painting and learn from looking (Félibien, 10<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, 1688, p. 293; Richardson). Questioning the skills of the enlightened art lover raised questions just as much about the very purposes of art, devoted to pleasing and instructing (Félibien, 9<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, 1688, p. 6), with the painting speaking “to the eyes, the spirit and the heart” (*aux yeux, à l'esprit et au cœur*, Dezallier D'Argenville, 1745–1752, I, p. II).

Material and intellectual knowledge thus formed the basis for the validity of the connoisseur's judgement, making it his authority. This position was particularly debated in the 18th century, first with the appearance of the concept of public (Du Bos, 1719; Coypel, 1732; La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747) and even more with the development of criticism. In this context, the conference by Caylus in 1748 played a part in stabilising the figure of the enlightened art lover by granting him rights and duties and, more broadly speaking, by basing his legitimacy on his knowledge and his utility. He thus established a real academic model for art lovers, the institutional guarantors of taste and the legitimate standards of judgement.

The semantic evolution in the terms *curieux*, *art lover* and *connoisseur* in art theory also bore witness to the progressive theorisation of the public of arts, which intensified from the middle of the 18th century around the figures of art critics and experts. The connoisseur's knowledge thus raised questions about the manner of understanding a work, both sensual and intellectual and, more broadly speaking, they made it possible to put the very utility of the arts into perspective.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Angel, 1642; Baillet De Saint-Julien, 1750; Bosse, 1649; Caylus, 1748; Chambers, 1728; Conférences, [2006-2015]; Coypel, 1732; De Lairesse, 1701; De Lairesse, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1668, 1677, 1699; De Piles, 1707 [1715]; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1752; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Félibien, 1666–1688; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Goeree, 1668 [1670 b]; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747; La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648; Le Comte, 1699–1700; Marsy, 1746; Peacham, 1634; Peacham,

1661; Perrault, 1688–1697; Perrot, 1686; Restout, 1681; Richardson, 1715 [1725], 1719; Sandrart, 1675 et 1679; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1791.

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Consent  $\implies$  Agreement, Harmony, Union  
 Contour  $\implies$  Proportion  
 Contrivance  $\implies$  Group, Union

## CONVENIENCE/DECORUM

fr.: *convenance, bienséance, décorum*  
 germ.: *Wohlstand, Wohlständigkeit*  
 nl.: *welstand(t), welstandigheid*  
 it.: *decoro, costume, convenientia, convenevolezza*  
 lat.: *decor, decorum, concinnitas, commoditas*

**Property, suitability, becomingness, correction, costume, custom, harmony, eurythmy, indecorum, composition, figure**

*It was in the early 16th century, in both the published and unpublished writings of Dürer, that the concept of decency (Wohlstand in German) made its entry into the terminology of art. The beautiful Wohlstand referred to the*

*the artefacts that provoked approval and pleasure (Wohlgefallen) in whoever was contemplating them. Dürer used the term taking into consideration the precise proportions of a building or human figure and its limbs (dem füß einen wolstand geben; 1528, f. E4b.). For him, the aesthetics of production were what dominated: good Wohlstand was based on work. It marked the completion of an intense creative process, involving hardship and application, when the work presented a complete aspect that had no more need to be improved. Dürer used the antonym Übelstand as the triple negation of beautiful (vngestalt), decent (vnschicklikeit) and useful (v[nu]tz; ed. cit. 1969, p. 274). He associated with decency (Wohlstand) the (individual) demands of perfection and novelty, a pretension that went beyond the limitations of traditional professions and customs. Wohlstand became the fundamental criteria for evaluating the arts in Northern Europe (jtzigem widererwaxung), that is, on a rank with those of Italy (1966, p. 144, c. 1508). After Dürer, Ryff (Rivius in Latin) was the second initiator of the terminology of art in German at the start of the modern era. His *Architectur* (1547), an abridged version of the most important writings of the Italian Renaissance on art, as well as his translation of *Vitruvius* (1548) acted as a link. These works created ties with the Latin and Italian artistic concepts, and encouraged the diffusion of the concept of Wohlstand beyond the boundaries of the German-speaking area. Ryff called ornament or decency (Zierd oder wolstand) the pleasant aspect and impeccable appearance in the sense of décor in *Vitruvius* (1548, f. CXXVIIr). In his translation of Alberti's *De Pictura*, the requirements of Wohlstand applied to the disposition of the figures. In conformity with historia, postures and gestures had to move the spirit and soul of the spectator. Ryff's translation, in which all poses (alle posen) had to be provided with beautiful decency (zierlichem wolstandt 1547, f. Ixv), referred to the concept of Alberti's concinnitas (harmony). When Van Mander used welstand/icheyt as the Dutch equivalent of the term Wohlstand used by Ryff (Nae t'ghetuyghen van moderne Schribenten / Als Leon Baptistae de Albertis, En Rivius, 1604, f. 17), it was necessary to note that for him, this decisive term primarily designated the representation of the harmony in the sense of Alberti's concinnitas.*

### The Propriety of Figures (*Wol-stand der Bilder*)

In the section of Sandrart's *Teutsche Academie* devoted to the theory of painting, the term *Bild* in the title of the chapter *Vom Wol-Stand der Bilder* did not mean painting or *imago*, but figure, according to

the usage in new early high-German. Sandrart also used *Bild* to designate actions and postures (*actionen und Stellungen*, 1675, p. 74). It was these that the painter had to paint *in a decent manner* (*wolständig erschaffen*), that is, he had to show the noble parts of the body, render them visible and uncover them as much as possible (*möglichst sichtbar und unverdeckt*), as well as dissimulating those that were less so (*ibid.*). Sandrart placed himself in the direct line of Van Mander's *Grondt*. The fourth chapter of his didactic poem focused on the actions and gestures of individual figures (*Van der Actitude, welstandt/ende weldoen eens Beeldts*). *Beeldt* also designated the figure and not the image in the modern sense of the term. The *Welstandt* of a figure also involved questions of clothing, about which Van Mander spoke in the tenth chapter. The fifth chapter (*Van der Ordinanty ende Inveny der Historien*) evoked the passage of the individual figure in the group of figures of the *historia*; by referring explicitly to Alberti and Ryff, Van Mander praised the beautiful harmony (*schoon Harmonye*) and decency (*welstandicheyt*) of the representation of the figures in painting (1604, f. 17). Similarly, in the chapter on history painting (*Vom Historien-Mahlen*), Sandrart stressed the importance of the decency of the figures, posture and affects (*wolstehende Bilder / schickliche Stellungen und Affecten*, 1675, p. 80a) for this genre. A third, and new, context of use which went beyond the anthropocentric uses described previously focused on landscapes. In his chapter (*Van het Landtschap*) Van Mander compared the spatial depth of Neptune's waves, which melted into one another without any of them standing out from any other (*T'welck crachtich onsen welstandt sal verstercken/Dats datmen van vooren aen al de gronden Vast sal maken aen malcander ghebonden/Soo wy de baren in Neptuni percken*, 1604, f. 35v–36). Sandrart praised the precise harmony of the landscapes by Claude Gellée, who taught

the keeping of colours in relation to the proportions of depth, in such a way that the time of day can always be recognised, and that the whole forms a perfect harmony, and thus that the parts in the foreground stand out significantly from those behind in relation to the distance.

(*die Coloriten nach Proportion der Weite halten/jedes Mal des Tages Zeit oder Stund erkantlich vorstellen/alles zusammen in gerechte Harmonie bringen/das vorder Theil stark herfür/das hintere/nach Proportion, weit hinaus lauffend*) (1675, p. 333a)

Sandrart's demands for preserving the proportions in the spatial depth of landscapes thus bore witness to the anthropocentric origins

of the concept. This was also true for the fourth context of use, which was also new: the decency of colours. According to Van Mander's conception, described in the twelfth chapter (*Van wel Schilderen/oft Coloreren*, 1604, f. 47v), the greatest decency (*hooghster welstandt*) was born of the fusion in all gentleness of the colours. Sandrart spoke of the universal harmony of colours (*universal-harmonie der Farben*, 1675, p. 329); their just distribution and association played a part in providing paintings with decency (Sandrart, 1675, p. 84). To designate the decency of colours in their proportioned spatial relationship of strength and weakness, light and dark, Sandrart used a term that was not found in Van Mander. He used the Dutch term *hauding* (*welches wir auf Niederländisch Hauding nennen*, 1675, p. 85). The latter context of use for the concept of decency—*Wohlstand* in the sense of *Haltung* (Dutch *houding*) and the harmony of colours—made new conceptions of paintings emerge, such as pictorial unity, homogenous representation, pictorial composition, which could all easily be embraced with a single glance. In the German translation of De Piles' *Cours de peinture* (1708, p. 362, *Mahlerey aus Grundsätzen*, 1760, p. 285), the term *Haltung* referred to the effect of the Whole. Thus, the semantics of Sandrart's title, *Wol-stand der Bilder* had undergone a shift: the pleasure (*Wohlgefallen*) drawn from the decency (*Wohlstand*) of paintings in the sense of well-proportioned individual figures or groups of figures became the successful effect of paintings in the sense of iconic or pictorial entities.

#### Decency as a Moral of Interaction

The degree of secondary signification of *Wohlstand* echoes the *decorum* and *honestum* of the ethical sciences of duty. Keeping in mind the *vitium indecentiae* (Vitr., VII.v.5), Ryff had already spoken of the lack of decency in the sense of unseemly, improper, and that which should not be done (*unbehörlicheit/oder nit zimung*, 1547, CCXXXV). In the 17th century, the semantics of the notion of decency was regulated by the relationships that ruled the society of Honest People (*Honnêtes Gens*), which defined the links that formed the basis for the noble disposition of “decent honesty” (*wolständigen Höflichkeit*), and which—as stressed by Sandrart in his *Lebenslauf*—was praised and appreciated by all princes and lords (1675, p. 19). The formulation was borrowed from Harsdörffer's *Kunstverständiger Discurs* (1652, p. 147), which also qualified the gestures of the “decency of behaviour”

(*der Sitten Wolstand*) and “decent honesty” (*annehmliche Höflichkeit*) (1648–1653, p. 216 *sq.*). Sandrart once again recalled Van Mander, who required *worthiness* (*eerlijcke gesten*) and *seemliness* (*zedich wesen*) in postures and gestures. The painter’s aim had to be to reinforce the *decorum* (*om welstandts verstercken*). Whether the figure was running or walking, working or resting, in all his movements, the painter had to show a behaviour that was seemly in relation to the action (*Sal onsen arbeydt welstandich becroonen*)—depending on respectability (*van eerbaerheys weggen*). Sandrart agreed with Van Mander. The positions of the limbs of the body, the hands and fingers, the feet and legs of seated or standing figures had to be *honest* (*erbarlich*); the result was better *decency* (*bässern Wolstand*) (1675, p. 80).

### From the Part to the Whole

For the vast majority of theorists, the ambivalence of the concept was preserved, and the normative discourse touched on the action, position, function, character, age, propriety and customs. Nevertheless, greater importance was given to the link between these different aspects of representation and history (Félibien, 1685, *8<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 333, Richardson, 1719, p. 27–28, Richardson, 1725, p. 51–52). Decency as a search for what is appropriate in the subject was essential for the French theorists, but it was nevertheless a far cry from the moral preoccupations of decency. Allusions to offences against modesty were thus relatively uncommon in the theory of the 17th and 18th century. On the contrary, the insistence of the conformity of the different parts of the painting with the subject was essential. This applied to clothing (Du Fresnoy/ De Piles, 1668, p. 15, Félibien, 1679, *5<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 84, De Piles, 1715, p. 5), the disposition of the objects (De Piles, 1715, p. 41–42), the perspective (De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 117*, p. 94–95), the drawing (Félibien, 1666, *1<sup>er</sup> Entretien*, p. 50, Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 87–89) and the colours (De Piles, 1677, p. 291–292, Félibien, 1679, *5<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 28–29, Leblond de la Tour, 1699, p. 57, Aglionby, 1685, p. 23).

In the same way that decency ruled the relationship of each limb or each piece of clothing to the entire body, it also ruled over all the parts of the composition. Fréart de Chambray used as his basis Leonardo da Vinci’s concept of conformity, having translated the *Traitté*, thus giving a very special role to *costume*. This he defined as “particular Decency, specific to each figure of the Subject that one deals with”



(*une Convenance particulière et spécifique à chaque figure du Sujet qu'on traite*), and qualified it as "Magistry or Perfection" (*Magistère de la Peinture*, Fréart 1662, p. 54, 56).

It is thus necessary that a Painter who aspires to some degree of glory in his Profession be very exact with regard to Costume, and that he make it, so to speak, his capital, because it is generally common to our five fundamental principles, and that it compose the Eurythmy in such a way that one must consider it as the Whole of the five parts [the invention or the choice of subject, the proportion, the colour, including light, the movement of the body and spirit, and the regular position of the figures or collocation].

(*Il faut donc qu'un Peintre qui aspire à quelque degré de gloire en sa Profession, soit fort exact à ce qui regarde le Costûme, et qu'il en fasse pour ainsi dire son capital, parce qu'il est généralement commun à nos cinq principes fondamentaux, et qu'il en compose l'Eurythmie de telle sorte, qu'on doit le considérer comme le Tout de ces cinq parties [l'invention ou choix du sujet, la proportion, la couleur incluant la lumière, le mouvement du corps et de l'esprit, et la position régulière des figures ou collocation].*) (Fréart, 1662, p. 57)

Exemplified by Poussin's conception, the reconciliation between costume and eurythmy, which also defined the harmony of all the parts of the painting, was mentioned by many French theorists (Félibien, 1685, 8<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 310–311, Restout, 1681, p. 126, Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 292–293, p. 304).

It was also from this perspective of the relationship of the parts with the whole that decency (*Wohlstand* or *Welstand*) was called on to govern, thanks to the colours and light, the positioning of the different parts of the painting, in the search for the pictorial effect of a coloured whole, in rupture with Alberti's conceptions of a more linear or grammatical composition, partially replacing the subject. For Sandrart and Hoogstraten, each separate part of the painting had effectively to play a part in the coloured unity of the composition, thus creating the relief, space and movement. The visual effect was thus associated very directly with *decency*, inducing a new rupture in the conception, which was no longer attached to nature, the character of what was represented, but which took into account the visual quality of the effect and its impact on the spectator. The models were thus no longer the compositions of Poussin, but those of Rubens and Rembrandt.

The *whole* developed by De Piles was the most successful expression of this conception.

Hans Joachim DETHLEFS  
[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Aglionby, 1685; De Piles, 1668, 1677, 1708 [1760], 1715; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Dürer, 1528 [1956–1969]; Félibien, 1666–1688; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Harsdörffer, 1652 [1648–1653]; Hoogstraten, 1678; Le Blond De La Tour, 1669; Restout, 1681; Richardson, 1715 [1725], 1719; Rivius [Ryff], 1547, 1548; Sandrart, 1675 et 1679; Van Mander, 1604.

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## COPY/ORIGINAL

fr.: *copie*  
 germ.: *Kopie/Copie*  
 nl.: *copie*

fr.: *original*  
 germ.: *Original*  
 nl.: *origineel*

**Copy (to), copyist, counterfeit, imitation, imitate (to), follow (to), apish imitation**

**Model, pattern, cartoon**

*The terms original and copy are closely linked. Frequently defined in relation to each other, through dissociation, or even opposition (Félibien, 1676, p. 676; Marsy, 1746, t. 2, p. 30), they implied a relationship between two poles of representation. Rather than corresponding to two sets of artefacts whose characteristics could be determined definitively, their applications varied, not only according to the domains concerned, but also according to the points of view adopted (Bosse, 1649, p. 8).*

### The Variety of Copies

#### *Varied Practices and Techniques*

The copy, derived from the Latin *copia*, abundance, was formerly associated with the concept of variety (*copie et varietas*). This variety started as soon as one considered the practices and techniques used for copying. Unlike the term *original*, that of *copy* was attached to a verb, making it an active principle. The action of copying, which consisted in reprising with exactitude a pre-existing model, supposed in principle that the copyist adhered to rigorous imitation, leaving barely any room at all for the introduction of differences. Yet this exactitude was liable to be attained by different means, which in turn supposed different manners of approaching both the copy and the resemblance that it had with the original. In the texts from the 17th and 18th centuries, the term *copy* was thus used to designate manual reprises produced with the same techniques and the same types of materials as their models, but also to speak of their adaptations in a different medium (Le Comte, 1699, t. 1, p. 139). And although the copy commonly

involved reprising a model manually, it was not impossible to find this term used to speak of the reproductions made not only by tracing or moulding, but also printing from an engraved matrix (Richardson, 1719, p. 194–196), or practices that included for some a mechanical dimension, making it possible by this means to multiply the number of copies.

Generally speaking, there was consensus for differentiating the practice of copying from that of imitating (Félibien, 1676, p. 624) or even, in German, *nachahmen* from *nachmachen* (Winckelmann, 1759, p. 151). However, the flexibility in the use of these terms made this demarcation porous. To this was added the fact that the manner of envisaging the practice of copying also varied in relation to what was, in the original, taken for the model. Thus some spoke of copies when the motif was reprised in general (Félibien, 1676, p. 624), whilst others spoke of “copyists of manner” (*copistes de manière*, Philippe de Champaigne, “Contre les copistes de manière”, *Conférence* du 11 juin 1672 cited in Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I, vol. 2, p. 461–463). This variety of practices covered by the use of the term “copy” weakened its definition. The boundary between *copy* and *original* thus often remained elusive (Richardson, 1719, p. 175–177); the case of the pastiche, which authors situated at the crossroads between these two categories (De Piles, 1699, p. 102), was evidence of this in particular, as was the case of partial or reduced copies (Lairesse, 1712, vol. 1, p. 320) or other copies that modified their model (Pernety, 1757, p. 99–100).

#### *Varied Uses and Effects*

Although the techniques and practices used for copying concerned various manners of approaching the copying of the model, the regard given to resemblance was not stable either. The authors stressed regularly that capturing the resemblance between the copy and its model varied in particular in relation to the knowledge one had of the original, and whether it was present or absent (Bosse, 1649, p. 8), as well as in relation to the expectations and uses that one had for the copy. Thus they sometimes referred to the functions of copies, which they distinguished from those of the original (Lairesse, 1712, p. 321). Such differences thus allowed them notably to reconsider the formal differences that separated the original from the copy, envisaging that they both required a different manner of looking at the image.

The fact remains that without direct access to the original, the copy, in its role as substitute, was commonly considered to be useful (Dupuy

Du Grez, 1699, p. 168). In this context, it was its pedagogical role that was the most often cited. The didactic virtues of a copy gave it a highly normative dimension. By this means, it was a matter of training the eye by learning to recognise the most famous artists and their most admired works. It was, however, also necessary to train the hand by copying them, this often involving the intermediary of other reproductions which became models in turn (Salmon, 1672, p. 3–6).

The role played by the copy in diffusing models was presented in particular as a means of acting in favour of the reputation of the original (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 196). At the same time, on the contrary, the negative action of defective copies, which deformed the original and diffused it among the public, was also occasionally emphasised (*Privilege du Roy*, obtained by Charles Le Brun on 8 May 1656).

#### *Diversity in the Copyists and the Quality of the Copies*

Clearly, not all copies were considered in the same way. On several occasions, the authors proposed the creation of a hierarchy, differentiating them into several categories (Baldinucci, 1681, p. 39; De Piles 1699, p. 98). To do this, they judged their respective qualities, particularly with regard to their degree of faithfulness to the original. From this point of view, deceptive copies found themselves given value (De Piles, 1699, p. 97–98). The most virtuous, those capable of creating an illusion and deceiving—if only for a moment—even the very best connoisseurs, effectively represented as many occasions for confronting the skill of some for clairvoyance, and judgment for others (Bosse, 1649, p. 7; Félibien, 1666, 2<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 329; De Piles, 1699, p. 100–102). Furthermore, while deceptive copies had been regularly mentioned in artistic literature since the 16th century, the concept of counterfeit, seen as a reprehensible crime by law, corresponded to the criminalisation of the copy, which developed only progressively in the course of the 18th century. To this was added the fact that this term, “counterfeit” (*contrefaçon* or *contrefaction*), only then concerned the copies put up for sale as originals (Joubert, 1799, p. 2–3).

In addition to its ability to remain faithful to the original, the copyist’s “industry” was also highlighted. It effectively counted among the criteria serving to assess the price of a copy (Dupuy Du Grez, 1699, p. 46). In German, the term *Fleiß*, like in Dutch that of *vlijt* (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 23–24), was in a similar manner associated with the “good copyist” (*bon copiste*), who worked with ardour, dili-

gence and application. In the texts, this sometimes implied assiduity, precision and meticulousness, even productivity, with a more or less direct moral connotation.

The authors certainly mentioned the existence of “good copies” (*bonnes copies*), sometimes going as far as to judge the best of them as liable to surpass the originals (Pernety, 1757, p. 99). Furthermore, they esteemed that it was preferable to be a “good copyist” (*bon copiste*) rather than a “mediocre inventor” (*inventeur mediocre*, Boutet, 1696, p. 73–75; Richardson, 1719, p. 177–178). The unflattering qualifiers were nevertheless just as present. There was thus the issue of the “simple copy” (*simple copie*, Félibien, 1679, 6<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 290), the “mediocre copy” (, De Piles, 1699, p. 97), or even the “servile copy” (*copie servile*, Pernety 1757, p. 528). The latter in particular were characterised by their laborious aspect (Hoogstatren, 1678, p. 196) and coldness (Dezallier d’Argenville, 1745–1755, p. XXX), as well as their compelling, stubborn or hesitant nature (Pernety, 1757, p. 528). As for the verbs *singer* or, in German, *nachäffen*, they turned the practice of copying into an activity subject to the spirit and the hand. Presented as a slave of invention, a line, a brushstroke that needed to be repeated, the copyist was unable to conform perfectly to the original (Bosse 1649, p. 56–57, p. 63; Richardson, 1719, p. 175–177). The copyist thus distanced himself even further from the imitation of Nature (Bosse, 1649, p. 56–57, p. 63; Richardson, 1719, p. 77). While the practice of copying was recommended in the context of apprenticeship (Bosse, 1667, p. 8), the authors also thus warned of its excesses and the derivatives it led to (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 219; Philippe de Champaigne, *Conférence* of 11 June 1672, cited in Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I, vol. 2, p. 461–463).

## The Value of the Original

### *Anteriority*

The existence of copies potentially increased the value of the original which, by definition, always preceded them while they remained subordinate to their model. This idea was clearly expressed in German, with *Vorbild* and *Nachbild*. This nevertheless became more complex when *origin* was confused with *original*, and the term original was used to designate the origin itself (Evelyn, 1662). In both French and English, there is a common root for both these terms. Etymologically, an *original* is found at the *origin* of other examples copied from

it. Certain German and Dutch terms used as equivalents also highlighted this original character. In Dutch, it was a matter of *origineel*, *originele stucken*, but also *oorspronkelijk werk* (Junius, 1641, livre 3, chapitre 7, p. 344). On the other hand, compared with that of *original*, the term *Urbild* (Winckelmann, 1755, p. 34) remained more rarely used in German artistic literature before the middle of the 18th century and then referred barely to the original painting itself.

Following on from this conception of the “original origin” (*original originaire*), the terms *nature* or *natural* found themselves associated with that of *original* (Bosse, 1667, p. 13). This nevertheless did not prevent the authors from also speaking of the original painting as the “first thought” (*première pensée*, Félibien, 1688, 9<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 37) or of more specifically appreciating the drawings as the “first originals” (*premiers originaux*), to the extent that they corresponded to the first materialisation of the painter’s ideas (Dezallier d’Argenville, 1745, t. 1, p. XVI). The original was nevertheless not necessarily envisaged as actually existing. In other cases, it was presented as the idea that an inventor formed in his mind, even before it took physical shape (De Piles / Dufresnoy, 1668, p. 40). This ideal and initial original, always upstream, going as far as to become immaterial, inaccessible and omnipresent, was opposed to the copy, which was secondary and degraded. Unlike the copy, the original—from which no verb was derived—was thus taken as being pre-existing. And, while in German *Nachbild* became *Nachzeichnung* (Preissler, 1759, n.p.) for a drawing, or *Nachstich* (Schumann, *Alchimedon*, 1684) for an engraving, there was no lexical variant for the term *Vorbild* which specified the manufacturing process by which it was obtained.

### Exemplarity

As soon as one considers that what is usually copied is only something that is worthy of being copied (Bosse, 1649, p. 7), the original is thus also characterised by its exemplarity. As a reference value, it is thus sometimes referred to as the *principal* (Sanderson, 1658, p. 16; Lairesse, 1712, vol. 1, p. 320–321). The term *model*, which can be found with a range of orthographic variants in French, German, English and Dutch, was of course also associated here with that of *original* (Bosse, 1649, p. 92–93), as were those of *patron* (Bosse, 1649, p. 62–63) and *pattern* (Salmon, 1701, p. 82). The *model* could extend to several levels and, by extension, be envisaged as a whole, more or less large, set of reference

values. On the other hand, those of *patron* or *pattern*, as well that of *carton*, generally corresponded to physical objects. With regard to these terms, we can furthermore note that they were also liable to be associated with the term copy (Salmon, 1672, p. 3–6). It was effectively a matter of designating the artefact used as model, a role that the copy transmitting it was also judged to be able to satisfy.

### *Authenticity*

Although the exemplarity of the original carried over on to the copy, the copy nevertheless never succeeded in attaining its authenticity. The ability to distinguish copies from originals was a theme that gained in importance in artistic literature from the 17th century, and developed in particular in the following century (Bosse, 1649, p. 64; Sanderson, 1658, p. 16; De Piles, 1699, p. 97–104; Richardson, 1719, p. 175–177). This aptitude for discernment was an integral part of the judgment of the connoisseur, even though it often arrived in third position (De Piles, 1699, p. 97–104; Pernety, 1757, p. 86). In this context, the case of replicas, particularly those known as *repetitions* (De Piles, 1699, p. 98–99; Marsy, 1746, t. 2, p. 30–31) was also regularly discussed. Here, their status was questioned, taking into account the fact that they were produced in the same studio as the original, or even by the author himself (Félibien, 1679, 5<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 74–77). It was nevertheless not only a question of signature. Such words effectively played a part in mixing, more or less directly, evaluation of the status of an artefact with that of its quality.

The manner of judging, which consisted mainly in determining whether something was a copy or an original, thus guaranteeing the goodness of a work, was sometimes decried when it became too exclusive. This attitude was then presented as specific to those who were ignorant, who omitted the possibility that there were “bad originals” (*mauvais originaux*, Félibien, 1676, p. 676–677). The preconceptions that carried an exaggerated attraction for the original (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 196) and the behaviours provoked by the belief in its value were described almost like a cult, or even a fetishism coupled with snobism; certain authors even went as far as to talk of “superstitious disdain” (*mépris superstitieux*) for the “adorers of relics” (*adoreurs de reliques*, Sulzer, 1771, vol. 1, p. 231).



### *Originality*

The question of discernment between copies and originals came up quite frequently. However, with a few exceptions (Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1755, p. XXXI), the term authenticity itself was not in use in artistic literature of the 17th and 18th centuries. Certainly, there were occasions when the noun *originality* was used with a similar meaning, but it nevertheless also remained relatively rare (De Piles, 1699, p. 98; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1755, p. XXVIII; Pernety, 1757, p. 436). It was only from the end of the 18th century that the use of this nominalised form of the term *original* started to spread and that it took on the meaning that it is commonly given today, that is, the expression of an initial or irreducible singularity. Understood in this way, the original no longer necessarily needed the existence of copies to receive this title. It now stood out solely for its originality.

This way of conceiving the original only started to be accepted slowly in the 18th century. Even before bringing up the originality, we can nevertheless remark that from the second half of the 17th century, the original was valued for its “inimitable” nature (Bosse, 1649, p. 48–49), “incomparable” nature (Evelyn, 1662, p. 59), its “spirit” (*esprit*, Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1755, p. XXX), its “freedom” of execution (*liberté d'exécution*, Bosse, 1649, p. 64) or its “gracious joy” (*joie gracieuse*, Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 196). Furthermore, the considerations regarding the “first fire that warms the imagination” (*premier feu qui chauffe l'imagination*) of the painter (Félibien 1688, 9<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 37; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745, t. 1, p. XVI), just like the interest shown in the concept of invention, and then of genius, were also in competition for encouraging the blossoming of this notion. However, it was only progressively, in the course of the century and in interaction with new understandings of individual singularity in art that, from giving value to the “original work” (*œuvre originale*), there was a shift towards that of “original genius” (*genie originale*, Sulzer, 1774, vol. 2, p. 861), thus opening up the path for new ways of conceiving both the original and the copy.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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1745–1752; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Evelyn, 1662; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; Hoogstraten, 1678; Joubert, 1799; Le Comte, 1699–1700; Marsy, 1746; Pernety, 1757; Preissler, 1759; Richardson, 1719; Salmon, 1672; Sanderson, 1658; Schumann, 1684; Sulzer, 1771–1774; Winckelmann, 1755, 1759.

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Costum ⇒ Convenience, Harmony

### COUTENANCE ⇒ AIR

Craftsman ⇒ Painter  
Critic ⇒ Criticism, Spectator

### CRITICISM

fr.: *critique*  
germ.: *Kritik*  
nl.: *oordeel*  
it.: *critica*  
lat.: *criticus*

**Critic, judgement, art lover, connoisseur, curios, judge, knowing men, admirer, spectator, well-experienced, well-willer (of art), science of a connoisseur, opinion**

Criticism, critic, critique, critico, Kritik. *The etymology of the word is clear: it can be traced back via the Latin criticus (he who judges or decides) to the ancient Greek krites (judge) and the related verb krinein (to separate, sift, decide a contest or judge). Criticism is effected by humans when judging other humans' creations, and thus entails the exercise of human discernment. Thomas Hobbes took an essential step towards defining the requisite intellectual tools (and defining the space within which they could be wielded) when he replaced the (religious) idea of conscience with that, secular, of opinion: he also distinguished between the public sphere in which mankind could and should live as a citizen in accordance with the laws of the state and the private sphere in which ideas—even critical—could be formulated (1650). In effect the history of art criticism is difficult to distinguish from that of literary criticism and, above all, political criticism. As late as the second half of the eighteenth century, the exercise of judgement in the public space—be it of art at the Salon or of philosophical texts—was the object of suspicion: throughout the Early Modern and the Enlightenment periods in absolutist states it could be interpreted as a political (potentially revolutionary) act.*

### Literary and Political Criticism

The notion appeared for the first time in the French language in 1561 when Jules Scaliger used the word *Criticus* in his work on poetry (1561); almost twenty years later, in a letter dated 1580, he spoke of criticism (1580). In England, Shakespeare used the word critic (1598), as did Francis Bacon (1605); only a few years later, at the beginning of his work *A Knight's conjuring*, Thomas Dekker made an appeal to his readers' benevolence, stating humbly that "Therefore (Reader) doe I stand at the marke of Criticisme (and of thy bolt) to bee shot at" (1607).

Scaliger defined criticism as the "*art de juger les œuvres de l'esprit*" and a "*jugement porté sur ces œuvres*" (1580). Criticism can be applied solely to man-made creations, and therefore designates a considered decision or conclusion, an act of human discernment concerning an artificial production, created by human hand in accordance with the rules of an art, or prescribed by art. The works to which Scaliger referred were exclusively literary; during the closing decades of the sixteenth century, throughout the seventeenth century and even during the early years of the eighteenth century, criticism was generally understood as a range of activities concerning literature, be it sacred or profane, ancient or

modern. Chambers (1728) clearly had this tradition in mind when he stated that the word criticism could be employed to designate the act of judgement in various fields, for example philosophical, theological or political criticism. However, he felt, it was generally used to signify the art of judging literature: “the ordinary use of the word is restrained to literary criticism”. The *Dictionnaire de l’Académie* (1694) and also in its successive editions (1718, 1740, 1762, 1798) proved less precise than the English reference work, stating merely, much as had Scaliger, that critique means “*l’art de juger d’un ouvrage d’esprit*”, without indicating whether this includes non-literary creations.

A number of important texts established the basic tasks of a literary critic and the ancillary disciplines which he could call upon in his work: palaeography, history, geography, antiquarianism thus figured alongside grammar, rhetoric and poetics. The best-known of these texts is surely Jean Leclerc’s *Ars critica* (1697), which went through five editions within just over thirty years. In England, Alexander Pope’s *Essay on criticism* (1711) was far less ambitious in its scope, concentrating on the criticism of poetry, and attempting to characterise the true critic. Pope’s *Essay* was warmly praised by Joseph Addison in the pages of the *Spectator* (1711), a journal which was very influential in establishing criticism as an activity that should and could be practised in the public sphere. This was of course considerably aided and abetted both by the relatively wide readership of the *Spectator* (up to 4000 copies per issue) and by the development of the coffee-house culture in England which offered an ideal place for debate and discussion, in a country which enjoyed the benefits of a constitutional monarchy and a strong parliament. In the preface to his *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697), Bayle explained that he wanted to put philology to the service of truth, unearthing the origin of false ideas, without sparing revered religious authorities or antique authors (“Remarques sur la hardiesse que l’on a eue de critiquer plusieurs Auteurs”). He understood “*critique*” as synonymous with the identification of errors that had marred the textual tradition—“*J’ai rapporté les erreurs de beaucoup de gens*”—and thus as what we would refer to as negative criticism.

#### Artistic Criticism—to what End and by which Critics?

A number of seventeenth-century texts alluded to art criticism. As early as 1662, Fréart de Chambray made a striking remark, observing that ancient artists invited criticism from all sectors of society, not

just philosophers and scholars but also craftsmen who, from time to time, made fairly astute comments (1662). He omitted, of course, Apelles' rebuke to the shoemaker who correctly criticized the artist's rendering of a sandal but had apparently overstepped the mark when he also questioned the painter's handling of the leg. This ostensible distortion of the anecdote recounted by Pliny does seem to imply that Fréart was suggesting that the space of critical discussion should be opened up and that laymen should be invited to engage in debate on the relative merits of art works. This prefigures, clearly, the important contribution to the question made by Jean-Baptiste Dubos. Fréart's ideas were not met kindly by all his contemporaries—it is perhaps not surprising that the painter Jacques Restout, determined to defend the dignity of artists, refused to recognize the judgement of laymen or even of amateur artists (1681).

Dubos was to take this reasoning one step further in his *Réflexions critiques* (1719). He observed that the general public judged a work of art in terms of the feelings that it inspired. He further stated that the principal purpose of any painting or poem is to rouse or excite feeling in a viewer or reader. Some works, continued Dubos, do not respect the generally accepted rules of creation (composition, execution, etc.) and would thus be considered “poor” works of art. Even so, they move us. Others, however, do respect the rules and must therefore be “good” works of art. And yet, they do not move us. Dubos concludes that “*le sentiment enseigne bien mieux si l'ouvrage touche, et s'il fait sur nous l'impression que doit faire un ouvrage, que toutes les dissertations composées par les Critiques*”. This emancipation of the art of criticism from the critics was to find echoes in Coytel (1732) and, of course, La Font de Saint-Yenne (1747). The latter summed up the question succinctly when he claimed that artists could profit from criticism not only from their colleagues, but also from “*un spectateur désintéressé et éclairé, qui sans manier le pinceau, juge par un gout naturel et sans une attention servile aux règles*.” La Font's insistence on the two types of criticism—by practitioners and by laymen—was a timely reminder of the need to curtail or at least counterbalance the movement towards criticism exercised solely or even mainly by amateurs. Some artists feared that the shoemakers' voices would drown out Apelles' reproofs; they found an articulate spokesman in the person of Levesque. In his article on “critique” for the *Encyclopédie méthodique* (1788) and the *Dictionnaire* (1791) drawn from it, he stated that the best critic of a painting is a painter and vituperated those—notably Dubos—who had

attempted to divest the artists of their critical monopoly and offer it to “gens de lettres” and especially “*amateurs armés à la légère*”.

Some authors attempted to discuss the tools that a critic should employ. Roger de Piles composed a *Balance des peintres*, offering each painter marks out of twenty for composition, drawing, colour and expression (1708). For the burgeoning critic this was a useful guide, proving that aesthetic judgement could be expressed not only in qualifiable but also in quantifiable terms. Jean-François Marmontel included in his article “critique” for the *Encyclopédie* (1751) a section on criticism in the field of the fine arts. He insisted on the notion of comparison, and also on the need to refer to a wide range of models and examples when attempting to criticize a work of art. This was essential, he stated, because no work of art could be absolutely perfect—each work had parts that were perfect and parts that were less perfect. It was only by reference to a multitude of models, each with weaker and stronger elements, that a critic could hope to form a correct judgement. Marmontel’s article is also notable in its presentation of three classes of critic: the “critique supérieur”, the “critique subalterne” and the “critique ignorant”. Despite the increasing interest paid to criticism, and the number of pamphlets that appeared on the occasion of each Salon, many of the art reference works published mid-eighteenth century do not include an entry “critique”: Marsy (1746), Pernetty (1757) and Lacombe (1753) omit the word, despite using it from time to time in various dictionary entries. Likewise, and more surprisingly, Batteux does not see fit to discuss the notion of criticism (1746).

### Between Connoisseurship and Judgement

In England the situation was rather different throughout much of the eighteenth century. The intellectual and political conditions for an open space for criticism were certainly available as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century, even earlier. Publications such as the *Tatler* (1709) and the *Spectator* (1711) bear witness to this. On the other hand, access to art was limited—in the absence of an academy and of a yearly or biannual salon, art criticism was hampered by a lack of material. In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the Grand Tour and other similar journeys offered the best spaces for art criticism. As early as 1719, Jonathan Richardson published a text which promised an explanation of the critical act, and explicitly associated the figure of the connoisseur with criticism: *The Connoisseur*,

*an Essay on the whole Art of Criticism as it relates to Painting* (1719). Unfortunately, Richardson made no attempt in this book to define or even explain criticism, and the word scarcely even features in the text. The essay centres on Richardson's wish to prove the scientific nature of connoisseurship, and is in three parts: how to differentiate between a good and a bad painting; how to identify the hand of a master; how to distinguish between an original and a copy. All this can be achieved by quantifiable and scientific methods rather than merely qualifiable ones. Some forty years later, Henry Home, Lord Kames, published his *Elements of Criticism* (1762). Home claimed that taste in the fine arts goes hand in hand with moral sense: for this reason, it is insufficient to rely upon one's sentiments when judging works of art, one must judge according to the principles of a rational science—Home's aim was to explain these principles in his work.

In the Dutch and German languages, the words *kritiek*, *criticus*, *Kritik* or *Kritiker* do not feature in texts throughout the Early Modern and the Enlightenment periods. Sulzer (1771) did not include an entry for critic or criticism, but did include the word *Kenner* (amateur or connoisseur). The word most commonly used in Dutch texts of this period is *oordeel* (or *oordeeler* for the critic), judgement, the preliminary act of discernment and appraisal. Many authors concentrate on the importance of the act of judgement for the artist during the creative process, for example Goeree (1670, 1682), Angel (1642), Hoogstraten (1678) or De Lairese (1701). From early in the seventeenth century, and throughout much of the Early Modern period, some authors discuss the identity of the judge: practitioner or layman. Van Mander (1604) advised the artist not to practise self-evaluation, but to leave the task of judgement to connoisseurs (“*zijn selven verachten is bespottisch*”). Junius (1641) suggested that judgement should be a solitary occupation: those who wish to judge correctly should be alone in front of the work of art, so as not to be disturbed and influenced by a work's detractors or admirers. He also felt, echoing Van Mander, that a talented amateur would offer a less biased judgement than an artist, who can be prejudiced when evaluating the work of his colleagues. Above all, he thought, judgement should be exercised only when a painting is completed, and should allow the artist to correct errors or shortcomings.

Cecilia HURLEY

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Angel, 1642; Bacon, 1605; Batteux, 1746; Bayle, 1697; Chambers, 1728; Coypel, 1732; Dekker, 1607; De Lairese, 1701; De Piles, 1708; Dictionnaire, 1694; Diderot, D'Alembert, 1751–1780; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Goeree, 1668 [1670 b], 1682; Hobbes, 1650; Home, 1762; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Lacombe, 1752; La Font De Saint-Yenne, 1747; Le Clerc, 1697; Marsy, 1746; Pernety, 1757; Pope, 1711; Restout, 1681; Richardson, 1719; Scaliger, 1561; Shakespeare, 1598; Spectator, 1711–1714; Sulzer, 1771–1774; Tatler, 1709–1711; Van Mander, 1604; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1791.

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Curios  $\Rightarrow$  Criticism  
Custom  $\Rightarrow$  Convenience



# D

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Dauber  $\Rightarrow$  Painter  
Decency  $\Rightarrow$  Decorum, Convenience  
Deceit  $\Rightarrow$  Pleasure

## **DECORUM $\Rightarrow$ CONVENIENCE**

Defect  $\Rightarrow$  Liberty  
Delicacy  $\Rightarrow$  Grace  
Delight  $\Rightarrow$  Pleasure  
Design  $\Rightarrow$  Sketch  
Diminution  $\Rightarrow$  Harmony (of colours)  
Discord  $\Rightarrow$  Harmony (of colours)  
Disposition  $\Rightarrow$  Composition, Effect, Genius, Invention, Judgement  
Distance  $\Rightarrow$  Studio, Landscape  
Distribution  $\Rightarrow$  Composition

## DRAPERY

fr.: *draperie*  
 germ.: *Gewand*  
 nl.: *draperie*  
 it.: *panno*  
 lat.: *vestis*

**Dress, apparel, garment, habit, stuff, fold, figure, lay-man**

*Art theorists devote a considerable amount of their discourse to drapery, that is, the clothing and fabrics that cover figures. Although the nude is judged to be primordial, mastery of drapery was effectively no less essential. Many rules were also defined, covering learning, anatomy and proportions, or even which pigments to use. Other recommendations focused more directly on the folds, light or nature of the fabrics. Similarly, the authors evoked the variety, unity and harmony of the work, all of which depended in part on the drapery. Finally, the fundamental principle of decency played a central role in the writings on clothing.*

### Drawing and Painting Drapery

Mastering drapery, which was essential for pictorial genres featuring human figures, required a certain level of knowledge that was acquired in particular through applied study and copy (Peacham, 1661, p. 128; Salmon, 1672, p. 9; Anonymous, 1688, p. 45). The examples to follow were often cited, but a clear distinction appeared between those on the one hand who recommended the Antiquity, and on the other the Venitian or northern painters. While some recommended studying Raphael (1483–1520) or Poussin (1594–1665), who both imitated Antiquity (De Lairese, 1712, vol. I, p. 200; Browne, 1675, p. 72–73), others, such as Aglionby, explained that this model was above all to be observed in sculpture (Aglionby, 1685, p. 110–111). According to the English theorist, antique draperies, with their stiffness and immobility, were not suited to painting. It was thus necessary to follow the Venitian painters, Rubens (1577–1640) or Van Dyck (1599–1641), in whom more movement could be perceived. This opinion was shared by Pernety, for whom the draperies of the Ancients rendered the works “crude, arid, poor and petty” (*cruds, arides, pauvres & mesquins*) and the figures “as hard as marble” (*aussi dures que le marbre*) (1757, p. 147).

Another debate emerged on the subject of learning: the use of an articulated wooden mannequin or a wax model, of different sizes, on which a fine cloth or wet paper was placed (Le Blond de la Tour, 1669, p. 30–32; Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 102). The artist could then study the “natural economy” (*économie naturelle*) and arrangement of the fabrics (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 102). This practice, which needed to be accompanied by a study of nature and the masters, was relatively common when it came to studying the folds of clothing. Using these tools, which were often judged essential for understanding folds (De Lairese, 1701, p. 41; Sandrart, 1675, t. I, livre 3, p. 82), was nevertheless still decried. Pader effectively stated that wooden mannequins were useless for painting figures in “agitated positions” (*postures agitées*) and that they could only present “languid, deathly gestures” (*gestes languissants et morts*), contrary to the movement and life that the artist must express (1657, p. 28–29). In turn, De Piles was more ambiguous. Although he recommended using a life-sized mannequin to “imitate reality well” (*bien imiter le vrai*), he added that those of a smaller size were to be banned because their draperies were “false” (*fausse*) (1708, p. 184–185 and 197). Subsequently, using a mannequin was strongly discouraged because of the affectation that could be the result (Coypel, “Commentaires de l’Épître à son fils. L’art de bien draper” [1719], in *Conférences de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, t. IV, vol. 1, 2010, p. 196). For Pernety, it was incoherent to want to imitate the colour and folds of a fabric by fixating on this type of “cold and inanimate” (*froi[ds] et inanim[és]*) model (1757, p. 148; repeated in Watelet, Levesque, 1792, p. 654). Expressing drapery that “breathes Mannequin” (*sent le Mannequin*), that is, an expression composed of hard, rough folds, also seemed to be widespread, showing even the prejudices against this practice (Marsy, 1746, p. 371; Lacombe, 1752, p. 226).

Considerations of another type, associated with the pigments, were included in the reflections on the technical treatment of the draperies. Salmon, La Fontaine, Boutet or Dupuy du Grez thus developed in detail which pigments to use depending on the different techniques (Salmon, 1672, p. 138–141; La Fontaine, 1679, p. 71–73; Anonymous, 1688, p. 103–105; Boutet, [1672] 1696, p. 34–44; Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 261–263). For yellow draperies, Boutet recommended for example massicot mixed with Gamboge and ochre; for another sort, it was possible to use Naples yellow or stil de grain instead of the massicot ([1672] 1696, p. 38–39; included in Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 262).

In the first case, it was a question of putting more or less massicot, “depending on the strength of the Shadows” (*selon la force des Ombres*) and adding bezoar if the colours were not brown enough. Changing draperies, that is, those with different light and shade because in particular of the reflections, were also dealt with. This sort of fabric, used notably for angels and “Young and Svelte people” (*personnes Jeunes & Sveltes*), designated the scarves and other similar materials that need to give the impression of movement and vivacity resulting from their lightness (Boutet, ([1672] 1696, p. 41; Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 264). Boutet spent a considerable amount of time on several colours, giving all the pigments needed to treat light and shade ([1672] 1696, p. 41–44; included in Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 264).

### Folds and Figure

Working on the figure beneath the drapery occupied a significant place in artistic literature and became the subject of many rules. It was important, for example, to match the clothing to the body and its movements with grace (Da Vinci, 1651, p. 125; Salmon, 1672, p. 28; Browne, “Appendix”, 1675, p. 15; Pernety, 1757, p. 144; Watelet, Levesque, 1792, p. 649). The folds then had to be placed carefully and naturally, without dissecting the limbs with the shade or lines (Da Vinci, 1651, p. 127; Sandrart, 1675, t. I, livre 3, p. 63; Coypel, “Commentaires de l’Épître à son fils. L’art de bien draper” [1719], in *Conférences de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, t. IV, vol. 1, 2010, p. 197). Similarly, it was necessary to take the posture into account: the closer the clothing was to the body, the more the folds needed to be close together and small (Salmon, 1672, p. 28; included in Anonymous, 1688, p. 45). The clothing, even if loose-fitting, should never appear to be a “mass of cloth, or bare clothes without support” (*un entassement d’étoffes, ou des habits despoüillez & sans soutien*) (Da Vinci, 1651, p. 51; Goeree, 1682, p. 331; De Lairese, 1701, p. 96; Lacombe, 1752, p. 226; Pernety, 1757, p. 146; Coypel, “Commentaires de l’Épître à son fils. L’art de bien draper” [1719], in *Conférences de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, t. IV, vol. 1, 2010, p. 197). Wet draperies—those that hugged the figure too tightly—were forbidden, as they were more appropriate for sculpture (Pernety, 1757, p. 146).

Furthermore, artists should not take advantage of drapery to hide any possible imperfections on the body, such as poor drawing or limbs not in proportion (Sandrart, 1675, p. 63; Goeree, 1682, p. 13–14 et 331; Watelet, Lévesque, 1792, p. 653). A real painter could not

simply draw the clothing and then allow the hands or the head to stick out from under it. To overcome all the failings mentioned and produce successful drapery, it was first of all necessary to draw the figure nude, respecting its proportions, before adding the clothing, as this is what made it possible to maintain the limbs correctly. In this way, the drapery took the form given to the outline of the body, and allowed it to reveal it (Goeree, 1682, p. 331; De Lairesse, 1701, p. 96; Pernety, 1757, p. 146; Watelet, Levesque, 1792, p. 659). Careful reflection, as well as mastery of anatomy, was thus necessary when drawing draperies. According to Sandrart, Dürer (1471–1528) became the master of this practice, particularly in two series of engravings: *la Grande Passion* (1497–1510) and *la vie de Marie* (1502–1510), in which the bodies are perfectly visible under the clothing (Sandrart, 1679, p. 20).

Successful clothing also depended on the way in which the folds were organised, and how many of them there were. De Piles and Coypel recommended “throwing” fabrics so that the folds appeared as “the effect of pure chance [rather than] careful arrangement” (*l’effet d’un pur hazard* [plutôt] *que d’un soigneux arrangement*); an impression of simplicity was thus obtained (De Piles, 1708, p. 177–178; “Idée” in 1715, p. 45; included in Marsy, 1746, p. 313–314; Coypel, “Commentaires de l’Épître à son fils. L’art de bien draper” [1719], in *Conférences de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, t. IV, vol. 1, 2010, p. 196). For the folds to appear natural, real and without pretense, mastering the light and shade was thus also necessary (Peacham, 1661, p. 43–44). Those subjected to intense light should not have “excessively dark” (*fort obscures*) shadows, and inversely (Da Vinci, 1651, p. 125). Similarly, the part situated the furthest on the inside should be the darkest because it receives the least light (Salmon, 1672, p. 28–29). The “grand manner” (*grande manière*) was characterised by a small number of wide, large folds, giving the figure a certain grandeur (De Piles, 1708, p. 181; Richardson, [1715] 1725, p. 193). Effectively, if they were multiplied, a confusion, contrary to “this rest and silence, so pleasing to the eyes” (*ce repos & ce silence si amis des yeux*) appeared (Coypel, “Commentaires de l’Épître à son fils. L’art de bien draper” [1719], in *Conférences de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, t. IV, vol. 1, 2010, p. 197; Dolce, 1735, p. 213–215; Pernety, 1757, p. 147).

Finally, the nature of the clothing defined the fold, which was thick and heavy, or light and delicate depending on the material: wool, silk, satin or velvet (Pader, 1657, p. 31; Sanderson, 1658, p. 31; Goeree,

1682, p. 334; Smith, 1692, p. 87; Dolce, 1735, p. 213; De Piles, 1708, p. 187–188; Pernety, 1757, p. 148). The folds and touch thus had to be in harmony with the thickness and specificity of the cloth (Coypel, “Commentaires de l’Épître à son fils. L’art de bien draper” [1719], in *Conférences de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, t. IV, vol. 1, 2010, p. 199). Dupuy du Grez recommended carefully studying the different types of cloth, particularly linen, twill or fine wool, so as to be able to use them appropriately (1699, p. 101–102).

### The Issues at Stake in Drapery: Harmony and Decency

Using draperies composed of different cloths was furthermore recommended in paintings featuring several figures, because of the resulting variety (Da Vinci, 1651, p. 125; De Lairese, 1701, p. 96; De Piles, 1708, p. 187–188; Lacombe, 1752, p. 226). Vinci, for example, proposed covering one figure with woollen broadcloth, whilst another could wear a more delicate silk fabric, with softer, gentler contours. Thanks to this diversity, “an unfortunate repetition of folds” (*une ennuyeuse répétition de plis*) was avoided, and it pleased the spectator more (De Piles, 1708, p. 187–188).

The treatment of the draperies could also be the basis for the harmony and unity of the painting (Watelet, Levesque, 1792, p. 651). Drapery, considered as part of the disposition, played a part in coordinating the work by filling in any gaps or uniting groups (De Piles, 1668, p. 102–104; Aglionby, 1685, p. 110; De Piles, 1708, p. 95 et 103–104; Pernety, 1757, p. 148; Watelet, Lévesque, 1792, p. 651). Similarly, thanks to the colours used, clothing could produce a certain harmony (Aglionby, 1685, p. 109–111; De Piles, 1708, p. 103–104; Lacombe, 1752, p. 226; Pernety, 1757, p. 148; Watelet, Levesque, 1792, p. 651). De Piles gave the example of the Venetian painters who used fabrics “of Colours similar to each other” (*de Couleurs approchantes les unes des autres*) that could only be distinguished “by decreasing the *Chiaroscuro*” (*par la diminution du Clair-Obscur*), thus creating real harmony and contributing to the whole (1668, p. 35). This unity also depended on the background, which had to match each drapery (Sandrart, 1675, p. 63; included in 1679, p. 16; De Lairese, 1712, vol. 2, p. 24). Thus a dark or greenish background associated well with yellowish, reddish, purple, blue or yellow clothes. Finally, the colour of the draperies needed, as a general principle, to be soft, so as not to contrast too severely with the carnation of the figures (Aglionby, 1685, p. 109–110).

Decency and *costume*, both omnipresent notions since the Italian Renaissance, applied to draperies, whether it was associated with their colour, their form or the social position of the figures (be they real or fictional). It was appropriate for a man of a higher social class to be distinguished from another of a lower class thanks to his drapery and accessories (Van Mander, 1604, X, 1, fol. 42v; Peacham, 1634, p. 56; De Piles, 1668, p. 20; Aglionby, 1685, p. 110; Coypel, “Commentaires de l’Épître à son fils. L’art de bien draper” [1719], in *Conférences de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, t. IV, vol. 1, 2010, p. 200; Dolce, 1735, p. 213; Pernety, 1757, p. 144). A king should have purple clothing and wear a crown, whereas a magistrate would have “very loose” (*fort amples*) draperies with “large, noble, majestic” (*grands, nobles, majestueux*) folds. Similarly, Jesus and his apostles must not wear the clothes reserved for craftsmen or fishermen (Richardson, [1715] 1725, p. 91–92). Certain characters from historical paintings were also associated with particular colours which needed to be respected: the Virgin Mary, for example, wore purple and azure, whereas St John wore scarlet (Browne, “Appendix”, 1675, p. 13).

The drapery should also be in harmony with the country and particular period in which the scene was set (Sandrart, 1679, p. 20), as should the age and gender of the figures (Testelin, s. d. [1693 or 1694], p. 29). Testelin observed that this principle had been well-respected in Poussin’s *The Israelites Gathering the Manna in the Desert* as the artist distinguished the clothing of the women from that of the men (1637–1638, Paris). The women thus had draperies that were “more hitched up and tighter” (*plus troussées & plus serrées*), whilst those of the men were “looser and longer” (*plus amples & plus long[ue]s*).

The failure to respect decency was considered an essential failing that had a negative impact on the general harmony of a painting. Coypel thus criticised the whims of the models of portraits requiring “gracious, varied and noble adjustments” (*ajustements gracieux, variés et nobles*), which transformed the “simplest bourgeoisie into a superb princess” (*moindre bourgeoisie en superbe princesse*) or “the Magistrate into Adonis” (*le Magistrat en Adonis*) (“Commentaires de l’Épître à son fils. L’art de bien draper” [1719], in *Conférences de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, t. IV, vol. 1, 2010, p. 202). These paintings ultimately did not present men as they were and in harmony with the fashions of their time, but in disguise. La Font de Saint-Yenne mocked portraits of women represented historically, in the clothing of Ancient



Greek goddesses, imagining that they had the “same graces” (*mêmes graces*) (1747, p. 24–25).

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Draught  $\implies$  Drawing, Sketch

## DRAWING

fr.: *dessin*  
 germ.: *Zeichnung*  
 nl.: *tekenkunst*  
 ital.: *disegno*  
 lat.: *graphice*

**Academy, cartoon, chiaroscuro, sketch, draught, study, painting, first thought, practice, proportion, science, theory**

*The definition of drawing is relatively ambiguous in all texts on art theory, in which the term's polysemy and uncertainty are prevalent. The definition thus ranges from the etymology of the word drawing to its practice, all whilst putting forward the spiritual value. Be it Félibien or Dezallier d'Argenville, the practice with the hand is promoted, to the detriment of more theoretical discussions like in the Renaissance. Chiaroscuro was particularly highlighted: definitions, practical applications and examples from the grand masters were the reflection of a time in which the quarrel between Poussinists and those of Rubenists was in full spate.*

The term *drawing* is ancient and found in all European languages from the Middle Ages on. It spread throughout the Renaissance, where it was the subject of a very sophisticated theoretical conception in the second half of the 16th century, from Giorgio Vasari to Federico Zuccaro. In both editions of *Vite* (1550 and 1568), Giorgio Vasari gave one of the most elaborate definitions of *disegno*: it was the “father of our three arts, architecture, sculpture and painting”. The *disegno* was a universal activity operating from the intellect, a form or an idea of the things of nature. It was defined as a concept (*concetto*) formed in the imagination and manufactured in the idea. Drawing thus comes from the soul, a theory taken up with a number of variants in the 17th century in France (La Fontaine, “Le Dessein est l’ame de la Peinture”, 1679, p. 1–2; Catherinot, 1687, p. 10). Thus formed in the intellect, it took physical form with the instruments of writing, thanks to the hand that draws the invention thanks to experience and judgement. There were two notions at the origin of drawing: the spirit and the hand, in other words, the intellect and experience or practice. Drawing formed a subtle alliance with the force of the spirit,

expressed in a concept and materialised in the judgement, knowledge and experience acquired at length by the artist. The term *disegno* was relatively ambiguous in Italian. It designated as much the concept and the intellect as the materiality of the work, manufactured with a quill or a stone. The distinction between these two main meanings was generally rendered by the context. This definition of drawing was developed with a number of subtle variants in the second half of the 16th century.

### Drawing, a Faculty of Understanding

In the 17th and 18th centuries, drawing as a concept disappeared, but the polysemy and ambiguity of the term *drawing* remained in both France and England, where the two terms, *drawing* and *design* covered this meaning (Bell, 1730, p. 66–67; Sanderson, 1658, p. 28; Richardson, 1725, p. 143–145). This ambiguity was underlined by several authors, and above all by Florent Le Comte (1699–1700, p. 71–72). When they did not provide their own definition of drawing under the cover of very general remarks about its elegance, its purity, its finesse, its freedom, its fire or its spirit (Richardson, 1719, p. 50–51), in short, its “considerable tastefulness” (*grand goût*) (Coypel, 1732, p. 2–3), most theoreticians found themselves incapable of giving a single definition, stressing the polysemy of the word whilst still presenting the principles of drawing. Dezallier d’Argenville (1745–1755, p. XVII) was the only one to divide drawings into five “kinds” (*espèces*), from the sketch to the correct or finished drawing. This polysemy nevertheless led well beyond any systematic classification because it touched on a form of aesthetics determined by each author. Drawing was defined as a “faculty of understanding” (*faculté de l’entendement*) (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 86–88) which was considered a science of the proportions of visible things. The science of drawing was perceived as an artist’s ability to imitate the visible and reproduce it in the right proportions. The essential ideas of the Renaissance remained, that is, that drawings were born in the spirit and thoughts formed by the imagination (Félibien, 1676, p. 396). Unlike the thinkers of the Renaissance (Armenini, and above all Federico Zuccaro and Lomazzo), these predicates did not introduce any conceptualisation of the ideas, but were immediately deviated from a demonstration inspired by scholasticism and philosophy for the benefit of practice. They were closely associated with a classification of genres and with practice that leads to painting, the

main fine art invoked. The association with painting also echoed the debates that animated academic discussion on the superiority of colour over drawing between the followers of Rubens and those of Poussin.

### Drawing was a Practice

Drawing was constantly defined as a practice (Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 36). It was a practice because it was an operation carried out by the hand (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 86–88), but the hand was guided by the spirit (Félibien, 1672, p. 297–299). The authors oriented drawing towards a practice even if they agreed that the spirit, by the intermediary of intention, governed it. Most of these theoreticians (Félibien, Testelin, De Piles, Dezallier d'Argenville) showed themselves, in France more than in England, to be extremely insistent on the practice of drawing, but without minimising the precedence of the intellectual qualities required. The attention given to the operation of the hand underlined the materiality of the work, the need for assiduous practice (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 81: “*On ne peut apprendre le Dessein, ou pour mieux dire la science du Dessein, que par l'exercice, & par l'application [ . . . ]*”). It faithfully reflected the care theoreticians took to refer to the practice, and to the descriptions of the techniques scattered throughout their words.

### Classification of the Techniques

Most theoreticians provided a wealth of details based on the example of the grand masters (Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian, the Carracci, Rubens, Poussin). They did not really establish any kind of hierarchy in these practices, but a rough, yet complete, classification of the categories of drawing was integrated more often than not into the definition of term. The techniques listed became the basis for their observations, and were the foundation for some of the main practices rendered with infinite variety (Richardson, 1719, p. 132). Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1755, p. XVII thus distinguished “kinds” of drawing: thoughts (see *sketch*), finished drawings, studies, the Academies and cartoons. These five categories were the most commonly referred to in the techniques and modes used. Paper was also very often cited as the main support. Antoine Le Blond de La Tour (1669, p. 29–30) detailed with great care, and authentic knowledge of the different sorts of paper (white, blue and grey), the pictorial effects or halftone

(blue paper). Certain authors were also very precise when it came to discussing the techniques and their particular effects, showing interest in the details of the techniques, reported meticulously. Dupuy du Grez (1699, p. 172–173) thus described using several graphic techniques such as stumps, wash drawings or ink wash drawings, and *dessin grainé*. On reading these observations, several authors (Félibien, Dezallier d'Argenville, Dupuy du Grez, De Piles) revealed evident knowledge of works whose production processes and effects seemed familiar to them, sometimes even with the mechanical reactions of the materials (charcoal, Indian ink, bistre, pastel).

In both France and England, *chiaroscuro* was used for particular emphasis, through washing or the pictorial effects of tonal gradations (De Piles, 1684, p. 11–12). The effects of light were sometimes the subject, particularly in England, of real scientific observations of the different aspects of the incidence of light on shade, as can be seen in the experiments with classification (Peacham, 1634, p. 29–31, Bell, 1730, p. 67–69, Browne, 1675, p. 33–34 and Smith, 1692, p. 58–59). The definition of *chiaroscuro* was extremely well-highlighted, particularly in France, and focused on an indirect discussion on whether it belonged to drawing or colour (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 183–184). This focus on it belonging to one or the other decided its pictorial quality, to the point that good knowledge of *chiaroscuro*, and the skill to achieve it successfully, were elevated to the level of a science of contrast thanks to the high degree of nuance in the gradations and balance of masses (De Piles, 1668, p. 121–124; De Piles, 1708, p. 372, p. 407–408; Richardson, 1719, p. 27–30). *Chiaroscuro* became the key to the definition of colour or drawing: did it belong to painting or drawing? If drawing itself was a part of colour, was *chiaroscuro* not then also a part of colour? *Chiaroscuro* represented the limits of the boundary between painting and drawing, which could not thus be reduced, in accordance with the polysemy of its definition, to the science of lines and contours. *Chiaroscuro* could be situated either at the extreme limits of drawing (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 183–184), or as a part of painting and colouring (De Piles, 1699, p. 13–14, p. 16; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1755, p. XXXVI). The nature of *chiaroscuro* lay in the game of contrasts between black and white, and the force of the specific effects of its pictorial craftsmanship. The reflections of Roger de Piles on the very nature of white and black, two colours belonging to the world of painting and not drawing according to the theoretician, were placed at the heart of the debate on colour:

But the term Drawing that they are given is not the one that is suited to one of the parts of Painting. [ . . . ] Thus, when light & shade are added to the outlines, it is not possible to do without white & black, which are two of the main Colours that Painters are used to using, and whose intelligence is understood beneath that of all the Colours, which are nothing more than Colouring.

*(Mais le nom de Dessein qu'on leur donne n'est pas celui qui convient à l'une des parties de la Peinture. [ . . . ] Ainsi lors qu'on ajoûte aux contours les lumieres & les ombres, on ne le peut faire sans le blanc & le noir, qui sont deux des principales Couleurs dont le Peintre a coûtume de se servir, & dont l'intelligence est comprise sous celle de toutes les Couleurs, laquelle n'est autre chose que le Coloris).* (De Piles, 1699, p. 13–14, p. 16)

The insistence on practice was accompanied by manuals for learning to draw, and the different means of doing so. Already present for French theoreticians, some were used to describing the techniques precisely, be it for the effects to be obtained with drawing (Le Blond de Latour 1669, p. 29–30, Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 172–173, p. 173–174, p. 246–248), or to detail the instruments and creation of a sculpted model (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 174–175), or even the use of special instruments. The quarrel over colour and drawing, with the interest and increasingly finely-tuned awareness of amateurs of painting, was contemporary to the diffusion of manuals by painters themselves. Thus Charles Le Brun published in 1668 the *Conférences sur l'expression des différents caractères des passions* and Gérard de Lairesse two works, *Grondlegginge der teekenkonst* (1701) and *Le Grand Livre des peintres, Het Groot schilderboeck* (1712) which both contained the principles of drawing and painting exposed with great importance devoted to techniques. In Germany, many *Zeichenbücher* presented beginners with the various stages for drawing a figure or a landscape well, starting with the positioning of the force lines (Preissler, 1722, 1740, 1759). Art lovers followed these examples by publishing manuals or rules for learning to draw well.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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1669; Le Comte, 1699–1700; Peacham, 1634; Preissler, 1722, 1740, 1759; Richardson, 1719; Richardson, 1715 [1725]; Sanderson, 1658; Smith, 1692; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694].

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# E

Easiness  $\implies$  Liberty

Economy  $\implies$  Agreement, Composition, Effect

## EFFECT

fr.: *effet*

germ.: *Effekt, Wirkung*

nl.: *werking*

it.: *effeto*

lat.: *effectus*

**Beautiful effect, economy, whole together, eye, expression, disposition, colour, colouring, chiaroscuro, harmony, spectator, taste, grace, truth, imitation, nature**

*The search for the harmony in a composition was omnipresent in art theory, although it was more often described in terms of grace. It was to this that was applied the pictorial order of what Junius defined as the *oeconomia totius opera* (samenvoeging in Dutch, 1637 [1638, 1641], III, 5), that is, the disposition of the subject. The concept of effect was first of all applied to perspective. It was in this context that Bosse evoked the sensation of colour, its force and weakness depending on its distance from the eye (1667, p. 48–49). The word was also frequently used for the rendering of volume*



or relief (Bosse, 1667, p. 39–40) and in the definition of shortening (Sandrart, 1675, p. 76). A second field of application was the rendering of the figure. Da Vinci (1651), repeated by many theorists, qualified in this way the movement and grace of figures. Its use then extended to the different parts that made up a painting, that is, the drawing, colour, composition and distribution of light. A painting had to be well-drawn and well-painted, as well as well-composed. A painting could not pretend to excellence if it did not have these qualities, and did not produce these effects. Dufresnoy, and more broadly *De Piles*, extended this idea by insisting on the ensemble effect, a beautiful effect, a good effect, the effect of the whole or *oeconomie* of the whole, thus inflecting in a new direction the meaning that Junius had given it. In his quest to express the visual qualities of objects and the composition, Hoogsraten (1678) evoked the concept of effect, without using the term in relation to harmony (*welstand* and *houding*) and most particularly in Rembrandt's *Night Watch* (1642, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum). The word also entered into the definition of painting, "real painting is that which calls out to us by surprising us, it is only by the force of the effect that it produces that we are unable to prevent ourselves from approaching it as if it had something to tell us" (*la véritable peinture est celle qui nous appelle en nous surprenant, ce n'est que par la force de l'effet qu'elle produit que nous ne pouvons nous empêcher d'en approcher comme si elle avait quelque chose à nous dire, De Piles, 1708, p. 4*). The concept occupied an increasingly large place in the first half of the 18th century, leading to a reorientation of the discourse on art, which thus distanced itself from the simple explanation of the means to be implemented and the way in which they operate, which still characterised the writings of *De Piles*. These means nevertheless remained present in the definitions of the *Dictionnaires* by Pernety and Watelet-Levesque, and in certain texts such as those of Dandré-Bardon, but the discourse on effect took a resolutely different direction at that point, turning to the more innovative approach of aesthetic criticism, and the reception of the painting by the spectator.

### Provoking an Effect

Replacing the figure in the definition of *beautiful expression* in a composition or history (Bosse, 1649, n.p.), colour occupied a central position in the question of effect. The natural properties of colour certainly played an essential role. All the theorists agreed on the prominent place given to their materiality, and thus proposed long digressions on their qualities. The mixture, the agreeableness, that

is, their friendship, their union and their contrast, which painters had to be familiar with through experience, were the guarantee of their value and their effect (sd. [1693 or 1694], p. 38; Le Comte, 1699–1700, p. 69). De Piles developed broadly the motivations of their effect by evoking the nature of the colours, with long digressions on black, on the role of local colour and the impact of light (De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 332*, p. 127–131). The overall effect of colours in relation to light, also called colouring, became an essential element in the perception that one could have of a painting. The unifying element of the painting for De Piles was light, and more particularly *chiaroscuro* (1677, p. 275–276; 1708, p. 19–20) which affected both the colouring and the drawing (1668, *Remarque 282*, p. 121–124; 1699, p. 13–16). The examples cited were the engravings of Rubens, and Titian's grapes. The *whole* or the *all-together*, or the *oeconomie* were the most accomplished expressions for the *beautiful effect* as it was defined by Dufresnoy (1668, p. 11) and De Piles (1668, *Remarque 74*, p. 77). Produced by the agreeableness and justness of the different parts, and often compared to music, it represented for the eyes what harmony represented for the ears (De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 78*, p. 83–85; 1715, p. 53).

This descriptive approach of the means to be implemented in order to create the effect of a painting was still present in the definitions of the terms given by Pernety (1757) and Watelet (1788–1791). It was indeed the agreement between the drawing, which imitated forms with audacity, boldness and exactitude, the colouring, which created the illusion, distinguishing each thing taking into account the local colour and natural light, and the effects of *chiaroscuro* or agreement in the lights, which supported the unity of effect created by the invention. As a result, this approach to the composition of a whole painting started by Dufresnoy, developed by De Piles and widely adopted by other theorists in Europe (Richardson) inflected the notion into a new direction. Certainly, painters had always been in search of an effect through a relationship between the parts and the whole, but this relationship was more based on history and narration, on the construction of a unified, centred space in which the figure and the action played a predominant role. The concept of effect was not absent, it was at the service of the subject. It was also a question of reading the history in a single glance which encompassed each part at the same time, and each accessory in agreement with the whole, and which provoked *the marvellous effects* cited by Poussin in the letter he sent to

Chantelou about the question of “*modes*”. It was also in this way that Le Brun conceived the expression of passions (Le Brun, 1698). This approach to the painting, which was already present in Alberti, and adopted in different ways by the painters in the following generations, justified practice that was often cited in the writings on art. Thus the use of manikins or models to paint, after nature, groups, attitudes and light, is recommended to capture the effect of all the action, and to conform to what was natural. The necessity for the painter to take into consideration the place in which the painting was to be exhibited (Vinci, 1651, p. 9), and to keep in mind the final effect of the painting (Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668, p. 14) were also often considered to be rules that the painter had to implement in order to judge a good or bad effect (La Fontaine, 1679, p. 58–59).

In the Netherlands, the discourse on the concept of effect focused on that of *practice*. In his search for artifices for attracting the attention of the spectator, Hoogstraten defined handling (*handeling*) in relation to the visual property of the object represented. Similarly, De Piles compared the *beautiful brush* to a beautiful voice (1715, p. 53). Without rejecting either reasoning in the appreciation of effect, or the subject, or nature, the effect through colour and light proposed by the French theorist presented a more complete approach to pictorial order (1708, p. 462). This opened up the way for another perception of painting which made the spectator a key player, and which met with great success in the 18th century.

#### Reasoning, Sensation, Sentiment or the Effect on the Spectator

The aim of art is to touch, to please. A painting, like a poem, is good if it moves us and binds us. The effect works through the eyes. Whilst remaining faithful to perception through reason, theorists tried to describe the physiology of visual reception. They sought to establish the link between two ways of regarding a work, the first through the eyes, the second through the intermediary of the mind.

The relationship between vision and understanding was a subject that is being debated throughout the 17th century in terms of perspective, measurements and then history. De Piles renewed this, considering the two faculties as independent. They could nevertheless be connected thanks to enthusiasm, which he defined as the transport of the mind, which made one think of things in a sublime, surprising and *vraisemblable* manner (1708, p. 70). The effect of the painting thus played a

fundamental role, and could also touch understanding. It induced a perfect sensation, created by the visual unity of the painting, the whole (1715, p. 39). This was possible if the painter himself had conceived the whole of the painting (the subject and whatever formed the whole) before producing it on the canvas.

A third term was added to the description of this physiology: sentiment. It was not a question of the effect of the passions which acted differently, and created empathy. Rather, it was that which came into being on the sight of a painting and which aroused “sensations and inner sentiment” (*la sensation & le sentiment intérieur*, Pernety, Watelet). The eye was essential. Painting uses the eyes to move us. Intellectual knowledge is thus awakened by the encounter between the effect and what we feel on the inside. The most important sense is sight, and it has more impact on the soul than the others. Abandoning the discourse on immediacy, the spontaneity of the first glance, and the pleasure that is obtained from the harmony that attracts and surprises, Du Bos broadened the notion of effect, and developed that of attachment. Yet it was the agreements that render a painting capable of binding, not understanding. On the contrary, reasoning must “submit to sentiment” (*se soumettre au sentiment*) which is the “competent judge in the matter” (*juge compétent pour la question*, 1740, p. 323-325). The sensitive experience of sentiment did not open up to a more in-depth analysis of the aesthetic experience. It was the basis, on the other hand, of an experience of taste that extended even to the ignorant. Du Bos accorded them the legitimacy of the right to judge a work by its effects, even if the ignorant were incapable of justifying their impression. “It is for the works to defend themselves against this type of criticism” (*C’est aux ouvrages à se défendre eux-mêmes contre de pareils critiques*, 1740, p. 289). Pernety explained the difficulty in judging effects, on the one hand because each part of the painting has a different effect on the eye of the spectator, and on the other because the effects were more or less sensitive depending on the knowledge that one might have. The very essence of a good painting was for it to produce a good effect, one that acted on the eye and mind of all spectators, whilst conforming to the effects expected of each genre.

### Imitation and Artifice

The subject remained important in the discourse on effect, and included that on pictorial genres (Aglionby, 1685, p. 101–102).

Specific characteristics were thus applied to them: to history, action, passions and illusion, to portraits, resemblance, to landscapes, the accurate representation of the sites (Pernety). In this context, the notion of effect raised new questions about imitation. Imitating the effects of nature was considered to be a definition of painting by many theorists, whether it was a case of painting the natural effects (the most commonly given example was water), or those that were more in conformity with the subject (pastoral, heroic style). The question of making beautiful choices remained an approach that was frequently cited in the writings on art. But, in resonance with the notion of effect, it was no longer a question of rectifying Nature in relation to an ideal, but rather of encouraging imitation that corrected all, whilst preserving the character (De Piles, 1708, p. 245–246). Imitation was linked to the notion of truth. De Piles made a difference between the truth of the natural object and the pretend truth that imitated its character and “which must, by its effect, call out to the spectator” (*qui doit par son effet appeler le spectateur*, 1708, p. 8). Art thus replaced nature, and imitation became illusion or artifice. The examples cited were Titian (c. 1488–1576), Rubens (1577–1640), Van Dyck (1599–1641), and Rembrandt (1606–1669) who used the exaggeration of colours and light to produce a good effect in the place in which it was to be seen (1708, p. 272–273, Browne, 1675, p. 33–34). Although he had already defended the role of sight and sensation, Du Bos ultimately relativizes the scope, and opposed De Piles on the function of imitation and its role in producing effect. For him, the impression made by imitating an object was not as profound as the object itself. On the contrary, it was only superficial, and “it had to excite within our soul a passion that resembles that which the imitated object could have excited there” (*elle doit exciter dans notre ame une passion qui ressemble à celle que l’objet imité y auroit pu exciter*, 1740, p. 26–27). This was the entire issue of painting and the challenge for the painter. By stating that

the most perfect imitation has only an artificial being, it has only a borrowed life, instead of the force and activity of nature finding themselves in the imitated object. It is thanks to the power that it has over nature itself that the real object acts on us.

*(l’imitation la plus parfaite n’a qu’un être artificiel, elle n’a qu’une vie empruntée, au lieu que la force & l’activité de la nature se trouve dans l’objet imité. C’est en vertu du pouvoir qu’il tient de la nature même que l’objet réel agit sur nous.)*  
 (Du Bos, 1740, p. 26–27)

Du Bos re-established the importance of the subject. The question of effect and truth in imitation was taken up by Diderot, who recognised in art the ability to replace nature to produce the effect of truth, to the extent of making the spectator believe that he was looking at a life which, through the eyes, charmed and moved him.

Effect is something that is difficult to capture. It calls out to us, takes hold of us in such a way that it is difficult to resist, as stressed by De Piles (1708, p. 4) and Richardson, who thus brought together effect and sublime (1719, p. 37). For De Piles, who was nevertheless the author who pushed his approach the furthest, it was possible to be sensitive to the effect of a painting, but it was not possible to “give reasons for it” (*en rendre raison*, 1715, p. 93). Perhaps this difficulty could explain that of the theorists themselves who, like Diderot on Chardin, found it difficult to talk about it (*Salon*, 1763, X, p. 194).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Aglionby, 1685; Bosse, 1649; Bosse, 1667; Browne, 1675; Da Vinci, 1651; Dandre-Bardon, 1765; De Piles, 1668; De Piles, 1677; De Piles, 1699; De Piles, 1708; De Piles, 1715; Diderot, 1763; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; La Fontaine, 1679; Le Comte, 1699–1700; Pernety, 1757; Richardson, 1719; Sandrart, 1675; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1792.

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Elegance  $\implies$  Agreeableness, Grace  
Embellishment  $\implies$  Ornament

## ENGRAVING/PRINT

fr.: *gravure, estampe*  
germ.: *Kupferstich, Etzkunst, Radierung*  
nl.: *etskunde, print-konst, gedrukte print*  
it.: *incisione, stampa*

**Etching, etcher, graver, graving, hatching, counter hatching, hatches, print, to print, stamp, stroke**

**Aquafortis, carving, chalcography (art of), cut (copper-cuts), copper-plate, mezzotint, woodcut**

*The terms used to designate the works obtained by printing from an engraved matrix vary in the artistic literature of the 17th and 18th centuries. Sometimes they are more referred to as “art of chalcography”, “copper-cut”, “engraving”, “etching” or “aquafortis”. Sometimes it is more a question of “print”, “stamp” or “picture”. Nevertheless, despite these variations, which add to all the linguistic differences, two categories can be identified, one focusing on the action of engraving the matrix, the other putting more value in the printed result. In French, these differences were rendered, on the one hand, by “gravure en taille d’épargne”, “en taille-douce”, or more specifically “gravure au burin”, “à l’eau-forte”, “en manière noire” and, on the other, by “estampe” or “image”. In German, it could be “Kupferstich”, “Grabkunst”, “Radierkunst” or “Etzkunst”, as well as “gedruckte Kunst”, whilst in Dutch it was “plaatsnykunde”, “etskunde” or “graveerkunde”,*

as well as “print-konst”. These terms were not mutually exclusive and frequently intersected, but their alternation, although not necessarily rational, seemed to underline the double dimension that these sheets are likely have.

### The Art of Engraving

In the different languages, the importance given to the technical aspect of the engraving corresponded to a lexicon which referred in particular to the tools or materials used by the engraver. Copper, wood, the burin or aquafortis were thus used to compose the various terms referring to the processes used to engrave the matrix, but also designated at the same time the resulting printed picture. Furthermore, the texts devoted to this medium are composed of a rich, technical vocabulary regarding the various stages the producing an engraving requires, from preparing the copper plate and the tools used, to the inking and press-printing, without forgetting the transfer of the model on to the matrix, and the engraving of the plate itself (Bosse 1645). This terminology did not always attain the same degree of precision depending on the language or the period. The German translation of Abraham Bosse’s *Traité des manières de graver* published in 1652 in Nuremberg, for example, ignored some of the terms presented in the original French version. There is effectively no equivalent given for “*gravure en taille-douce*” (art of chalcography), “*gravure en creux*” (intaglio), “*taille d’épargne*” (relief print) or “*eau-forte croquée*”; many of the terms designating specific tools or processes were thus replaced by more general or less specific phrases (Böckler 1652). It was a different story a century later, in the translation of the extended version of this text published in Dresden in 1765, which revised for the same occasion the former translation (Nitzsche 1765).

From one century to another, it was also possible to observe enrichment of the lexicon to qualify the cuts. This may have been directly linked to the tool or procedure used by the engraver. The distinction between the effects of the burin and the aquafortis were covered particularly often (Bosse 1645; Lairesse 1712, vol. 2, book 13, chapter 4–5). In addition to the differences in the engraving methods considered in relation to factors that were above all technical, there was nevertheless also study of the quality of the lines and how they were arranged. What emerged were manners of engraving that were designated not in relation to technical factors, but in manners of tracing, guiding the cuts and arranging hatching, counter-hatching or stippling (Lairesse



1712, vol. 2, livre 13, chapitre 5–8; Le Comte 1699, t. 1, p. 144–151; Cochin 1745).

In the 18th century, it is possible to observe that the terms associated with ways of engraving—and, by extension, the tools and processes used by the engraver—had become more numerous. To the precision or cleanness of a burin or to etching “*croquée*”, were added for example the “*pointe badinée*”, “*l'eau-forte pittoresque*”, as well as manners “*grignoteuse*”, “*méplate*”, “*grasse*” or “*facile*” (Le Comte 1699, t. 1, p. 144–151; Cochin 1745). The description of the cuttings became more precise at the same time, with attempts to codify how they were used, particularly in relation to the subjects represented. It was thus not only a matter of soft, hard, equal or unequal, “*roides*”, “*courtes*”, “*serrées*” or “*nourries*” cuts, but also of the first cuts which were distinguished from the second and third cuts, thus creating a hierarchy through their arrangement (Florent Le Comte 1699, t. 1, p. 144–151; Cochin 1745; Diderot, D’Alembert 1751–1780, vol. 7, p. 882).

The ways of tracing the hatching, counter-hatching and stippling described by various authors marked the graphic dimension that this medium commonly took on. The habit of presenting drawing as the foundation of this art (Le Comte 1699, t. 1, p. 139) was not the only indication of this. This importance given to the engraving stroke could also be found in the texts which associated writings on engraving methods with the question of spatial treatment. The crisscrossed hatching or pattern of crossing and parallel cuts, as well as possible stippling or other small cuts that played a part in giving effects of volume and relief, were effectively mentioned as much in the context of the discourse on engraving (Lairessse 1712, vol. 2, livre 13, chapitre 8; Evelyn 1662, chapitre 5 p. 118–119), as in the treatises on perspective (Bosse 1653, p. 35–38, p. 75, pl. 31). As for Antoine-Joseph Pernety’s *Dictionnaire portatif*, it is possible to note the dual association of the terms “engraving” and “perspective” in the entries on “trace” and “line” (Pernety 1757, p. 541).

### Printed Pictures

In the artistic literature of the 17th and 18th centuries, prints were also regularly referred to as a means of designating these works. “*Stampare*”, the Italian origin of the French term for print, “*estampe*”, was highlighted by several authors who thus drew attention to the fact that it was a question of “printed pictures” (Félibien 1676, p. 583;

Fréart De Chambray 1662, n.p.; Dupuy Du Grez 1699, p. 84). Whilst the focus is on the matrix when talking about engraving, the print is conceived more as the printed result, or the imprint of the cuts that were first engraved and then inked (Watelet, 1751–1780, vol. 5, p. 999). This reference to printing, and the need for a press to do so, was found in a similar manner in the German, English and Dutch terms: “*Druck*”, “print” and “*prent*”.

In French, the term “*image*” was furthermore regularly assimilated with that of “print” (Félibien 1676, p. 623; Marsy, t. 1, p. 134). Speaking of picture in this field was frequently presented as relating to the common language of the merchants of prints, or a wide-ranging public of buyers and viewers (*image*, Bosse 1645, p. 72; Félibien 1676, p. 583; Fréart De Chambray 1662, n.p.; Pernety 1757, p. 304). This term appeared particularly when it came to promoting these sheets, insisting on the pleasure to be obtained from contemplating them. In German, various works or prefaces seeking to promote the publication of prints thus spoke of “*Bilderlust*”. The use of the terms “*Bild*” in German, “picture” in English, or “*image*” in French, to designate prints were also attested in artistic literature. It occasionally referred to the sheets of engraved pictures that accompanied the publication of a text (*image*, Bosse 1649, p. 110). It could also thus be used, in a context of learning to draw, to designate in particular models judged to be exemplary (Salmon 1672, p. 6). More generally speaking, in English the term “picture” was regularly used when the pedagogical role of prints was emphasised (Evelyn 1662, p. 139). As for “*Bilderkunde*”, in the words of Johann Friedrich Christ, this designated the use of prints for studying (Anonymous, *Kern Historie*, 1749, t. 2, p. 85). Even if they did not necessarily exclude the possibility of taking into account the intrinsic qualities of the engraving, these uses of the term “*image*” in French, “picture” in English or “*Bild*” in German, in the field of prints thus often tended to focus on figurative content.

The idea by which the potential uses of a print were various, and that their utility for this reason became reinforced, was a marked argument in the artistic literature of the 17th and 18th centuries (De Piles 1699, chap. 28, p. 74–90). Although the gaze of the connoisseur was often promoted by the authors, they did not exclude the possibility that various other publics keen on pictures might find satisfaction there. The desires and needs that prints made it possible to satisfy were in particular associated with its multiple status (Félibien 1688, vol. 5, p. 157–158; Sandrart 1675, livre 2, p. 49; Du Bos 1740, p. 474). This

characteristic made prints an omnipresent mean of reproducing pictures and included the possibility of seeing these pictures as intermediates or substitutes, the name of which—“*geringere Mahlerey*”—used by Johann Friedrich Christ was for example the echo (Christ, 1747, p. 7).

The expression “reproductive print” (*gravure de reproduction*) was nevertheless not commonly used in the 17th or 18th centuries. And rather than reproducing, it was a matter of “multiplying” (*multiplier*)—the number of prints being presented as potentially high, not to say “illimited” (*illimité*, Félibien 1676, livre 2, chapitre X, p. 382; Watelet, 1751–1780, vol. 5, p. 999). This multiplication of the prints was thus questioned in particular in relation to its effects. It was presented as the perfect means of diffusing these models (Félibien 1676, livre 2, chapitre X, p. 382), in space (Du Bos 1740, p. 474), as well as over time (Félibien, 1677, t. 1, p. 1). From the reputation of an invention or a painting in particular to that of an artist (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 196; Laireesse 1712, vol. 2, livre 13, p. 373), or even that of a country (Félibien, 1677, t. 1, p. 1), the power that a print could have as a multiple was regularly recalled by the authors.

To the variety of techniques and fields invested by printmaking—to which was added the potential multiplicity of the prints—corresponded a considerable diversity in how these pictures were understood. From this point of view, the judgements essentially taking into account the invention reproduced were, for example, differentiated from those that focused more on the way in which the picture had been engraved (Bosse 1649, p. 73–74). These different ways of looking at the pictures obtained by printing from an engraved matrix seemed to have found an echo in the alternation of the terms used. Without being mutually exclusive, they cohabited, just as the authors spoke alternatively of *intaglio*, engraving, print or even picture.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Enthusiasm ⇒ Effect, Sublime  
 Eurythmy ⇒ Convenience, Proportion  
 Exhibition ⇒ Gallery

## EXPRESSION OF PASSIONS/EXPRESSION

fr.: *expression des passions, expression*  
 germ.: *Passion, Affekt, Bewegung der Seele*  
 nl.: *hartstocht, passie, uitdrukking*  
 it.: *passione, affetto dell’animo*  
 lat.: *affectus, passio*

**Motion of the soul, passion, emotion of the soul, air of head, representation**

*The expression of passions was the essence of painting, which was based on its comparison with poetry and theatre. It was also what best defined the quality of the painter. For De Piles, it was “the touchstone of the Painter’s*

*spirit*” (la pierre de touche de l’esprit du Peintre, 1715, p. 43–44). The maxims of Horace on how to move the spectator (*Ars poetica*, v. 102–103), of Cicero (*De oratore*, II, 4) and Quintilian (*Inst. Orat.*, XI, 3, 67) on the power of gestures played a part, through quotations or anecdotes, in defining the bases of expression. Since the Renaissance, expression of passions was linked to narration through gestures. Emotions were thus translated by the movements of the body. The question of movement expressing the action was initially touched on by Alberti (*De Pictura*, 1435, II, no. 41–43). It was then developed by Leonardo da Vinci, who insisted on the need to observe emotions in reality (an angry man, a desperate man), and also invited painters to take an interest in the modifications of the expressions of the face, particularly in a man who was laughing or crying (1651, chap. CCXLIV, p. 80, chap. CCLIV–CCLVII, p. 82–83). Two conceptions of the expression of passions were thus defined: the first, by Dolce, which aimed to be persuasive and based on nature, and the more normative one by Lomazzo. Both tendencies continued to be expressed in the 17th and 18th centuries. To mark the close relationship that emotion had with history, and the rapport between action and passions, the term expression appeared around 1650, first in the general sense of the expression of the subject, synonymous with representation. This disappeared quickly in favour of the expression of passions when certain theorists defined real theories of passion, and when these theories were no longer read solely through the prism of history, but became in themselves the subject of the discourse.

### General Expression and Particular Expression

For Le Brun, *general expression* was the natural resemblance of the things that one wanted to represent, whereas *particular expression* was the movement of the heart. Both concepts were nevertheless intertwined. The *expression of the movements of the soul* was considered to be the most noble and the most sublime part of painting by Fréart de Chambray, and was a part that was superior to proportion, colouring and outlining because it “does not only give life to Figures through the representation of their gestures and passions, but it further seems that they speak and reason” (*ne donne pas seulement la vie aux Figures par la représentation de leurs gestes et de leur passions, mais il semble encore qu’elles parlent et qu’elles raisonnent*, 1662, p. 13). It was thus closely linked to invention and what theorists referred to as *costume*. Showing what each figure did, said and thought, had to obey the principle of *vraisemblance*; and this principle could be narrative (conformity

with the decency of the actions) or poetic (appropriate movement for the action and emotion that the painter wanted to represent). The expression of each figure was thus what brought coherence to the painting, and simultaneously what allowed the viewer to read and understand the history. In a certain manner, the term *expression* was a very general meaning of the representation of a subject, in which the attitudes played a major role. This definition corresponded to that which da Vinci gave to attitude (1651, chap. CCXVI–CCXVIII, p. 71). The importance given to decency was also in conformity with the presentation made by Junius. This conception, which was intimately linked to history, was also present in Dutch (Junius, Hoogstraten, Lairesse) and English literature (Richardson 1719, p. 27–28; 1725, p. 87–89, 93–94).

Showing the circumstances of history remained essential for Félibien, but he insisted above all on the expressions of the faces, thus introducing a new meaning into the term:

as it is on the face that one knows the best the affections of the soul, one ordinarily uses the word expression to indicate the passions that one wants to express.

*(comme c'est sur le visage que l'on connoist mieux les affections de l'ame, on se sert ordinairement du mot expression pour signifier les passions que l'on veut exprimer.)* (Félibien, 6<sup>e</sup> Entretien, 1679, p. 207–208)

General expression and the expression of passions were thus distinct, whilst nevertheless remaining closely linked. Together, they formed the basis of the comparison with the poets, orators and musicians who “subject all parts of their composition to the general idea of their subject, and give such an appropriate air, that the whole expresses a passion” (*assujettissent toutes les parties de leur composition à l'idée generale de leur sujet, & leur donnent un air si convenable, que tout ensemble exprime une passion*, Testelin, *Extrait des conférences tenues en 1673*, [1693–1694] p. 21). Through his manner of representing pain, joy, sadness or admiration in conformity with the principle of decency, Poussin (1594–1665) appeared to be the painter who had brought novelty to the conception of history, which “entertained through novelty and taught an infinity of things that satisfy the spirit and please the eyes” (*divertit par la nouveauté, & enseigne une infinité de choses qui satisfont l'esprit, & plaisent à la veüe*, Félibien, 8<sup>e</sup> Entretien, 1685, p. 332–334).

One of the main issues with painting and the expression of passions in particular was effectively to provoke emotion. It was thus necessary that,

the Painting from the very first glance inspire the main Passion: for example, if the Subject that you have undertaken to deal with is joy, it is necessary that everything that is included in your Painting contribute to this Passion, in such a way that those who see it are immediately touched by it. If it is a sorrowful Subject, everything must express sadness, and the same with the other Passions and types of Subject.

*(le Tableau du premier coup d'œil en inspire la Passion principale: par exemple, si le Sujet que vous avez entrepris de traiter, est de joye, il faut que tout ce qui entrera dans votre Tableau contribuë à cette Passion, en sorte que ceux qui le verront en soient aussi-tost touchez. Si c'est un Sujet lugubre, tout y ressentira la tristesse, & ainsi des autres Passions & qualitez des Sujets.)*  
(De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 78*, p. 83)

The dominant passion thus had to be both visible and effective, but that did not exclude, on the contrary, that the painter take into account the individuality of each figure, and differentiate between the *attitudes of the heads* in conformity with nature (De Piles, 1677, p. 271). Painting different expressions made it possible to show different characters (Félibien, *10<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1688, p. 191). The history was thus constructed from the particular expression of each character, and could be read through the emotions or movements of the soul, which were often contradictory between the different characters. This variety nevertheless had to obey a rule stated by da Vinci: the gestures of a figure always had to be in correspondence with the passion expressed on the face (1651, chap. CCXLIV, p. 80). The example of Le Brun's *The Tent of Darius* (1660–1663, Versailles, musée national du Château) was used as the model example of the harmony and conformity with decency necessary for the expression of the subject. It was also emblematic of the way in which it was advisable to associate unity and variety: the general expression respected the unity of time, place and action. The unity of subject was thus created, without excluding variety thanks to the differentiated and individualised expressions of each character (Perrault, t. 1, 1688, p. 226–228).

## The Expression of Passions

### *A Theory to be Used by Painters*

At the same time, certain theorists developed a discourse on the rendering of the expressions of passions independently of their relationship with history. The example of Aristides, who knew how to paint the soul, has been cited innumerable times (Peacham, 1634, p. 5; La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648, p. 106). From this perspective, the painter's aim was to "Make with a few colours that the soul be visible to us" (*Faire avec un peu de couleurs que l'ame nous soit visible*, Dufresnoy, 1668, p. 24). Peacham proposed a pictorial expression of passions using colours (Peacham, 1634, p. 25–26). All the theorists referred to the expression of passions, but few wrote at length about it. Van Mander was the first northern theorist to devote a chapter to the expression of passions (1604, chapter 6). In very poetic language, or with examples, he defined the significant attitudes of the body or face marked by the effect of the affects (1604, fol. 22–23). Brown described eleven passions from which sprang different actions of the body, or modifications to physiognomy (1675, p. 55–56).

The theory of the four humours or complexions, that is, the sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic or melancholic temperaments, which, depending on the predominance of one or their combination caused the changes in aspect, form and colour of the face, was often considered to be an essential science for painters. Based on the medicine of Galien, and defined by Quintilian as the principle for representing an affect in painting, this conception was still very widespread in the 17th century, throughout Europe. It determined the modalities for rendering the carnations as they are found in artistic literature. However, in Germany and France, a new model was emerging, brought about by the publication in 1649 of Descartes' *Traité des passions de l'âme*.

While still referring to the theory of temperaments, Sandrart thus introduced a new approach to the rendering of the expressions of the soul. His chapter on *Affects* (*Affecten, Gemütsregungen*, 1675, chap. IX, p. 77) was completely different from the one on attitudes that preceded it. The preoccupations of the painter joined those of the philosopher, with a view to understanding the birth and progression of the affect and its visible impact on the body. In addition to their essential role in the birth and transmission of emotions, reason and imagination participated in the real physiology of the affects. Imagination was the intermediary between the senses and the heart, which opened



and allowed the humours to escape and spread throughout the body. Imagination also had the power to capture what the senses perceived and transmit it to the reason, which had the ability to judge and produce an agreement or disagreement. Through the typology of six fundamental passions, the focus was placed on the signs of the effect produced, which the German theorist turned into norms.

Le Brun started with the Cartesian postulate that “the gland that is in the middle of the brain is where the Soul receives the images of passions” (*la glande qui est au milieu du cerveau, est le lieu où l’Ame reçoit les images des passions*, 1698, 2<sup>e</sup> édition 1713, p. 19–20) and thus evoked interior and exterior movements, before going into detail on the representations of the passion through the modifications of the face. The classification of the modes of physical manifestation of the passions was precise, but concerned only strong emotions. These were divided, using the Cartesian example, into six primitive (love, hate, joy, sadness, admiration and envy) and seventeen compounds that formed from combinations of the preceding six, nevertheless without taking any interest in gentle passions like Mignard did in *Conférence sur la Sainte famille de Raphaël* (3 sept. 1667 in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I., vol. 1, p. 136–147). The published work, *Méthode pour apprendre à dessiner les passions* (Le Brun, 1698) was both theory and practice, with an explanation of the nature of each passion and an illustration.

#### *The Body and Face as the Language for the Expression of Passions*

In the conference on 5 November 1667 (in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I., vol. 1, p. 156–174) on *The Jews Gathering the Manna in the Desert* 1637–1639, Paris, musée du Louvre), Le Brun praised the model of Poussin, and introduced physiognomy for the first time. In his *Remarques* which accompanied Dufresnoy’s poem, De Piles recognised the importance of the head which “is what gives the most life and Grace to the Passion, and which alone contributes in that more than all the rest taken together. The others taken separately can only express certain Passions, but the head expresses them all” (*est celle qui donne plus de vie & de Grace à la Passion, & qui contribue en cela toute seule plus que toutes les autres ensemble. Les autres separement ne peuvent exprimer que certaines Passions, mais la teste les exprime toutes*, 1668, *Remarque* 233, p. 115–117). In the same way, citing Cicero and not just the theorists of the Renaissance, he also returned to the common idea that the eyes were the windows of the soul. But, as he considered this

approach to be incomplete, he gave nuance to their importance, and once again integrated the movements of the body as the language of passions (1708, p. 167–171). Rubens was thus for him the painter who best knew how to express gentle and violent emotions (1677, p. 268–269). The cooperation of the face, hands and all the body was also, for Dupuy du Grez, necessary “for expressing passion, interior movement, and the state in which is found the body that one represents in a Painting or in a Drawing” (*pour exprimer une passion, le mouvement intérieur, & l’état où se trouve le corps qu’on représente dans un Tableau, ou dans un Dessein*, 1699, p. 290). Despite the considerable diffusion of the drawings by Le Brun, which remained at the heart of academic teaching, this idea that “Passion in Painting is a movement of the body accompanied by certain traits on the face, marking the agitation of the soul” (*la Passion en Peinture, est un mouvement du corps accompagné de certains traits sur le visage, qui marquent une agitation de l’ame*, De Piles, 1708, p. 162) dominated in theoretical writings and dictionaries (Marsy, 1746).

### Codification and Natural

In addition to the question of its relationship with history, the importance of movements and the face, the debate also focused on the model to be used by painters, that is, the live model or drawn model, leading to a certain codification of passions. In his *Traitté*, da Vinci had already insisted on this point:

I say that the painter must notice the attitudes and movements of men immediately after they are produced by whatever accident that occurs, and he must observe them straight away, and sketch them on his table so as to remember them [ . . . ] to study the expressions according to this model [ . . . ] it is greatly advantageous that he has previously remarked them in the true and original nature.

*(Je dis que le peintre doit remarquer les attitudes & mouvements des hommes immédiatement après qu’ils viennent d’estre produits par quelque accident subit, & il doit les observer sur le champ, & les esquisser sur ses tablettes pour s’en souvenir [ . . . ] pour en estudier l’expression après ce modele [ . . . ] il est bien advantageous de l’avoir auparavant remarquée dans le vray original naturel).* (Vinci, 1651, chap. CCXVIII, p. 71)

The importance of observation from life was also underlined by Sanderson (1658, p. 49–50). Browne made explicit reference to da Vinci (1675, p. 44–46). More than Lomazzo, who proposed rules rather

than imitating nature in order to attain a rendering truer than nature, da Vinci was also a theoretical model for Sandrart, who took much inspiration from him. On the strength of his Cartesian approach to emotions, he reconciled the theoretical knowledge of interior movements and pictorial expression, insisting on the life of affects. From the slow and fast interior movements which were at the origin of the visible transformations on the face, the finality of his discourse was to give understanding, and to make perceptible the effects of movements of breaths of life, even if they had taken place in a short instant (1675, p. 77). He thus made a conception accessible to practice, and provided rules for representation, whilst remaining profoundly attached to a natural and living treatment.

The work published by Le Brun, *Méthode pour apprendre à dessiner les passions* (1698), also had both theoretical and practical aims, but it was different from that of the German theorist. From an expressionless face, and through modifications to the eyebrows, eyes, nose and mouth, which resulted in a range of facial configurations, he aimed to propose models for students. Far from the expression of a living model, the drawings that accompanied the descriptions were schematised, and defined a codified language of passions that was aimed at painters, and was a key for the spectator. Le Brun's system was based on a scientific approach, on observation and on a classification. Its usefulness was recognised (Lairesse, 1712, I, p. 61). But he was also criticised for the excessive codification that came from his principles. To avoid a schematisation, De Piles and Félibien encouraged painters to look at nature, but above all to follow the principle given by Horace that a painter should himself feel the emotion in order to be able to paint it effectively (Dufresnoy/Piles, 1668, p. 118). The painter's emotional involvement was the best guarantee of that of the spectator. To achieve it, he had to make use not of a codified drawing, but of a live, natural model, using the model proposed by da Vinci (1651, chap. CCXVIII, p. 71).

The great quality of a painter, just like that of a poet, was effectively "that they excite in us these artificial passions, presenting us with imitations of objects capable of exciting in us real passions" (*qu'ils excitent en nous ces passions artificielles, en nous présentant les imitations des objets capables d'exciter en nous des passions véritables*, Du Bos, 1740, p. 26–27). The issue for painting was to incite passion in the soul of the spectator and it was all the more difficult to obtain given that it was not reality but "The copy of the object [that] must, so to speak, excite

within us a copy of the passion that the object would have provoked” (*La copie de l’objet doit, pour ainsi dire, exciter en nous une copie de la passion que l’objet y auroit excitée*, Du Bos, 1740, p. 26–27). For this reason, in academic circles in the 18th century, there was a significant increase in interest for Leonardo da Vinci’s approach. In 1759, the count de Caylus established and financed a painting competition, a *Prix d’expression* from a live model in which there was a return to the importance of the face:

The face shows not only the character of the passions of the soul, but of all the movements of the body [ . . . ] its expression attracts the eye and fixes it [ . . . ]. Le Brun felt the need for a study of this type, and he wanted to replace any defects with the traits of the passions and heroic characters that he had engraved. This was a poor form of assistance. When they are not as heavily subjected to a manner, what are they in comparison with nature?

*(Le visage porte non seulement le caractère de toutes les passions de l’âme, mais de tous les mouvements du corps [ . . . ] son expression attire l’œil et le fixe [ . . . ]. Le Brun a senti la nécessité d’une pareille étude, et il a voulu suppléer à son défaut par les traits des passions et des caractères héroïques qu’il a fait graver. C’est un médiocre secours. Quand ils ne seraient pas aussi fortement soumis à une manière, que sont-ils en comparaison de la nature?)*  
(6 October 1759)

Michèle-Caroline HECK  
[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Browne, 1669 [1675]; Conférences [2006-2015]; Da Vinci, 1651; De Piles, 1668, 1677, 1699, 1708; Dolce, 1557; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Dufresnoy 1668; Descartes, 1649; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Félibien, 1666–1688; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1638; De Lairese, 1701, 1707 [1712]; La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648; Le Brun, 1713; Lomazzo, 1584; Marsy, 1746; Peacham, 1634; Perrault, 1688–1697; Richardson, 1715 [1725], 1719; Sanderson, 1658; Sandrart, 1675, 1679; Testelin, s.d [1693 or 1694]; Van Mander, 1604.

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## EYE

fr.: œil, regard  
 germ.: Auge, Gesicht  
 nl.: oog  
 it.: occhio  
 lat.: oculus

### **Gaze, view, sight, viewing, judgement, spectator, lover of art, connoisseur**

*Vision and the eye occupied an important position in the writings on art in the 17th and 18th centuries. But the different meanings of these terms, and above all the contexts in which they were used, expressed a wide range of different approaches. The manner with which the gaze of the painter was described, the perception he had of nature, the models, his own work, all bring us into the intimacy of the act of painting. The description of the means used to attract the spectator’s eyes highlighted the link between the painter and the viewer, in this rather astonishing equation: look to paint, and paint to be looked at. There was nevertheless a fundamental ambiguity between the eye with which one understands and the eyes of the body, even if both*

*play a part in the act of looking. What respective role did they play in the vision of the painter and that of the spectator? It was this ambiguity that underlay all the discourse on which the theorists debated.*

### Looking in Order to Paint

The painter first had to train his eyes in the practice of his profession and in the execution of a painting. This was the foundation for the practice of copying during apprenticeship. The artist then had to take into account the conditions under which he was able to practice his gaze by disposing his model in relation to the light and by positioning the painting (Vinci, 1651, chap. XXXIX, p. 10; chap. XXXVII, p. 9). These concerns reappeared in the definition of the qualities of the studio (Sandrart, 1675, p. 81; 1679, p. 20). Watching what he had to paint appeared as necessary for judging its effect. It also aroused in the painter the courage necessary and the love for painting, essential qualities for inspiring the painter. All that justified for Lairese that the painter started by painting the background of the painting (1712, I, p. 63).

Looking at nature rather than trusting one's idea of it was an essential precept for Da Vinci (1651, chap. XX, p. 5) who thus encouraged painters to paint after nature. In the writings on art, the concept of imitation was omnipresent. It nevertheless varied in its relationship with the truth and beauty, depending on the way one looked at nature. Sandrart insisted on nature's ability to show and teach the convenience of colours (Sandrart, 1675, p. 84). Observation was thus the result of eyes with the gift of reason (*verständiges Auge*), capable of appreciating the agreement of colours, the decency of the proportions (Sandrart, 1679, p. 14) and beauty (Browne, 1675, p. 1–2).

The eye also played a role in the execution. Hoogstraten granted the eyes a favoured position, and the hand and brush had to submit themselves to them (1678, p. 234–235). The eye was nevertheless not alone. He was supported by judgment, and together they contributed to rendering the natural (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 235). Judgment made it possible to rectify. Thus “adjusting the eye to reasoning” (*ajuster l'œil avec le raisonnement*) became a guiding principle in academic teaching. It was necessary to learn how to use one's eyes. It was however not a matter of seeing things as they were, but as they needed to be represented (Fréart, 1662, p. 20). Reporting the words of Poussin, Félibien defined two types of gaze. The first was natural and received

“naturally in the eyes the form and resemblance of the thing” (*naturellement dans l’œil la forme et la ressemblance de la chose veüe*), the second supposed “that one sought with particular application the means of fully understanding this same object” (*que l’on cherche avec application particulière les moyens de bien connoître ce mesme objet*). The latter, called “*Prospect* is an office of reason that depends [ . . . ] on the eye, the visual radius and the distance of the eye from the object” (*Prospect est un office de la raison qui dépend [ . . . ] de l’œil, du rayon visuel & de la distance de l’œil à l’objet*, 1685, 8<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 282–283). The principles of perspective could thus support the eye.

Bosse also distinguished these two types of gaze and focused clearly on the second, which he associated with respecting the rules. In addition to the fact that drawing according to the rules of perspective made it possible, more than by drawing as the eye sees (*à veüe d’œil*), to discern the different manners (1649, p. 56–57), Bosse granted eyes guided by rules a much greater quality:

there is in that a difference, that is that two Painters being gifted with the same Spirit, good Eye and good Hand, if one came to practise Copying all things by the rule, and the other as the eye sees, it is more than certain that the former will do better, for sure, and more precisely his Works than the other.

(*il y a en cela une difference qui est, que deux Peintres estans doüiez d’un pareil Esprit, bon Oeil, & bonne Main, si l’un venoit à s’exercer de Copier toutes choses par la regle, & l’autre à veüe d’œil, il est très assuré que le premier fera bien plustot, asseurement, & precisement ses Ouvrages, que l’autre.*)  
(Bosse, 1649, p. 39)

This same convergence between eye and rules was applied to the drawings of sculptures from Antiquity, and more particularly to their measurements by Audran (1683, préface, n.p.). But the debate was animated between the partisans of strict perspective, as taught by Bosse, and those who, like Pader, recommended showing proportions depending on the place in which the painting was to be hung, “that is, in relation to the eyes by which it was to be seen: it is the eyes that will judge whether or not it is proportioned” (*c’est à dire à l’œil duquel elle sera vue: c’est l’œil qui la jugera proportionnée*, 1649, p. 9–10).

### Seeing, Looking, Representing

It was thus the respective roles of the eye, the imagination and the reason that were brought into question. In a system in which the

essence of the art was imitation, the artist created from what he saw. But this vision went beyond the simple reception of what was seen by the eyes. Certainly this point of view in an optical sense fed research on perspective, and optics were considered necessary knowledge for painters. However, other preoccupations also appeared in theoretical writings. From this eye that received, a mental image was produced that reconstructed the visible. This reconstruction, which was nevertheless an imitation, brought into action the gaze jointly on the imagination and on understanding. From observation, imprinting in the imagination exact representations of nature appeared for many theorists to be the condition necessary for a painting from nature. Junius insisted particularly on the role of the eye as the starting point for imagination (*d'eerste beginselelen deser imaginatie*, 1637, I, II). Intimately linked to his conception of imitation, the painter's gaze, which had to be well-trained (*wel gheoffend*, or *oculus eruditus* in the Latin version, 1637, I, III, 6), or artist and learned (*konstigh, Konst-ghelerde*, 1637, I, V) made it possible to penetrate the essence of the things he wanted to represent.

Browne evoked the journey from the eye to understanding on the sight of perfections ("all the Perfection of sweet Delights belonging to the Sight are communicated to the Eye, and so conveyed to the Understanding", Browne, 1675, p. 1–2). Sandrart was also very explicit in his description of the act of representation. He included the aptitude for observation (which he took verbatim from Da Vinci) in an intellectual approach bringing into play the imagination, reason and the hand. Observation of nature gave rise to knowledge, imagination, thought and judgment that the artist preformed himself in his reason, and then brought to the paper with his hand ([es] *entspringet eine gewisse imagination, Einbildung, Meinung und Urtheil, welches ihm der Künstler in seinem Verstand vor-formeet, und nachmals [ . . . ] durch die Hand zu Papier bringet*, Sandrart, 1675, p. 60). This same process for an image built thanks to a gaze that fell on the visible world concerned not only the forms and drawings, but also the colours (1675, p. 63). This relationship between the eye and reason brought about a fundamental rupture in the conception of pictorial space that was no longer ruled solely by perspective lines, and which opened up a new conception of the painting.



## Guiding and Stopping the Eye

The composition of a painting should guide the eyes. They should wander across the work in order to understand, and be captured all of a sudden. The issue was certainly to arrange the figures in such a way that this harmony of which it was so often question could be sensitive to the eye, and above all that the history be intelligible. It was thus agreed that the eye be “guided by the actions of all the figures” (*conduite par les actions de toutes les figures*, Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 29). The eye should not be left “always wandering [ . . . ] they needed to be stopped by the groups of figures which do not separate the main subject, but serve rather to connect it” (*toujours errants [ . . . ] il faut les arrêtez par les groupes de figures qui ne séparent pas le sujet principal, mais servent à le lier*, Félibien, 1685, 8<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 368–369). The eye was also essential for recognising all things in the painting (*erkantlich in die Augen fallen*, Sandrart, 1675, p. 62). The composition was thus conceived for a double movement of the gaze: circulation across the parts of the painting, and capturing the harmony of a *glance* (*coup d’œil*), created by the effects of perspective and the light and shade essentially of the drawing (Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 29).

Theorists questioned what could intervene to alter the circulation of the gaze. It was a matter of not confusing it too much with excessive variety. This variety was nevertheless not to be rejected completely as it could be mastered, and for that it was necessary to “conceive the Whole Together and the effect of the Work as a complete vision, and not each thing in particular” (*concevoir le Tout-ensemble & l’effet de l’Ouvrage comme tout d’une veuë, & non pas chaque chose en particulier*, Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668, p. 16). The “complete vision” (*tout d’une veuë*) used by De Piles when he translated Dufresnoy did not evoke perspective. On this point, the French theorist joined Hoogstraten, who compared the eyes to the appetite which was gradually awakened thanks to the variety of dishes (*zoo vermaekt zich het ooge in veel verschillen de zaecken. Zie maer toe, dat die verschillentheyt geen stryddicheyt invoert, maer dat’er de minzaeme Harmonie blijve*, 1678, p. 122).

The “whole-together view” (*tout d’une veuë*) used by Dufresnoy introduced a new conception of composition which opened up broad perspectives. It was developed by De Piles in his *Remarques* on Dufresnoy’s poem. By comparing the groups of figures in a composition to “a Concert of Voices, which all together support each other through their

different Parts, make an Agreement which fills and flatters the ears agreeably” (*un Concert de Voix, lesquelles toutes ensemble se souâtenant par leurs différentes Parties, font un Accord qui remplit & qui flatte agreeablement l’oreille*, De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 132*, p. 97–98), he proposed a visual conception of the composition. The eyes no longer read the history, but saw and were satisfied “if you assemble them in such a way that some support and serve to reveal the others, and that all together are in agreement and make a Whole” (*si vous les assemblez en sorte que les unes souâtiennent & servent à faire paroistre les autres, & que toutes ensemble s’accordent & ne fassent qu’un Tout*) and “if on the contrary you separate them, your eyes will suffer to see them all dispersed together, or each in particular” (*si au contraire vous les separez, vos yeux souffriront pour les voir toutes ensemble dispersées, ou chacune en particulier*, De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 132*, p. 97–98).

The visual harmony of the painting was defined by the principle that the eyes could only capture one object at a time—preferably a round one, “which one either captures in its convexity, or sees as concave” (*soit qu’on le prenne dans sa convexité, ou qu’on le regarde comme concave*). For the same reason, the gaze could embrace a bunch of grapes in its entirety, but could not capture in a single glance the grapes spread over a table (De Piles, 1677, p. 233–234; De Piles, 1668, *Remarques 132*, p. 97–98). The paintings by Rubens (1577–1640) were thus exemplary because:

as a single object tires the eyes even less than three, he has done things in such a way that the groups on the sides give way to that in the middle which being in stronger and more brilliant colours, attract the eye to the centre of the composition as if it is only a single, unique object.

(*comme un seul objet fatigue encore moins les yeux que trois, il a fait en sorte que les groupes des costez le cèdent à celui du milieu qui estant de couleurs plus fortes & plus brillantes, attire l’œil au centre de la composition comme si elle n’estoit qu’un seul & unique objet.*)

(De Piles, 1677, p. 231–232)

Thus a *satisfied, tired, suffering* (*satisfait, fatigué, souffrant*) eye was sketched that had to be stopped thanks to shadows, called *reposes* (*repos*):

that you make the bodies appear lit up by the Shadows that stop your sight, which do not make it possible so easily to go any further, and which provide repose for some time.

*(que vous fassiez paroître les corps éclairés par des Ombres qui arrestent vostre veüe, qui ne luy permettent pas si-tost d’aller plus loing, & qui la font reposer pour quelque temps.)*

(Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668, p. 28 et 282)

## Calling out to the Eye of the Spectator

### *From Afar, from Close up*

How a painting should be viewed, and from what distance, became key questions. They were formulated in different contexts. First, they were formulated around the concept of “manner” (*manière*), in the debate that opposed them to the partisans of the precise, finished manner that should be seen close-up, and the freer, rougher manner such as that of Titian (v. 1488–1576), that was appreciated from a distance. The eyes then played the role of arbiter. For Sandrart, the former manner was praiseworthy on the condition that it be animated by the spirit (*Geist*) and that it did not lose in quality when viewed from afar, whereas the latter gave a false impression of facility (Sandrart, 1675, p. 72). But looking from close-up or from afar also defined the different categories of paintings (large, small), to which corresponded a specific manner of contemplating the work. A completely new discourse on the conditions in which the gaze could be trained appeared in the writings by De Piles:

there is no painting that must not have its point of distance from which it should be viewed: and it is certain that it will lose all the more its beauty when he who sees it distances himself from this point, either to move closer in or to move further out.

*(il n’y a point de tableau, qui ne doive avoir son point de distance d’où il doit estre regardé: & il est certain qu’il perdra d’autant plus de sa beauté, que celui qui le voit sortira de ce point, pour s’en approcher ou pour s’en éloigner.)*  
(1677, p. 299–301)

Richardson thus gave a method for judging a painting: from a distance the subject, the whole-together of the masses, the colouring, what pleases the eye, from close-in the contrasts (1719, I, p. 53–54).

It was no longer the manner of the painter that determined the distance point for looking at the painting, but the eye of the art lover who sought to examine the painter’s eye by discovering the artifice, to the point of becoming, as Jacqueline Lichtenstein proposes, an artist-gaze (*La couleur éloquente*, 1999, p. 239). Several anecdotes,

repeated many times like common places, recalled the difficulty, for the art lover, of seeing well. The first was that of the ignorant person who did not recognise the beauty of a Venus painted by Zeuxis and to whom Nicomachus offered to lend his eyes that he might see it properly; the second was that of the curious person who walked past the works of Raphael without noticing them. In fact, these anecdotes referred to two ways of approaching the spectator's gaze.

#### *A Learned Gaze and an Artist-Gaze*

The spectator's gaze was first considered as the ability to judge, and the pleasure of the eyes was intimately associated with that of the spirit. And so that the eye of understanding could operate in a just manner, sciences, such as perspective, were necessary for the spectator, just as they were necessary for the painter. Similarly, art lovers needed to be familiar with and understand the painter's approach. The quality of his judgment depended on it, and this, for Félibien, was not always the case (1685, 8<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 282–283). From this perspective, to provide art lovers with the basics of the art of painting, a great many treatises and books to learn how to draw (*Zeichenbücher*) were published in Germany, England and the Netherlands, aimed at both painters and art lovers.

It was also a gaze that was intimately linked to the faculty of judgment, which was brought into play to distinguish a copy from the original. This was a gaze that needed to be cultivated, practised every day in order to acquire the faculty of discernment to recognise the copy from the original, and ancient from modern works (Junius, 1637, III, VII, p. 10–11). This signification given to the gaze that Junius also called the habit of the eyes (*oculorum consuetudine*, 1637, p. 217) appeared as one of the first incidences of the concept of *connoisseurship*, which developed in the second half of the 18th century.

But there was another relationship that linked the eyes to the spirit. The satisfaction provoked by the sight of a painting also had to make that “the spirit learns something new in the invention of the subject, and in the faithful representation of the action that the Painter has tried to reveal” (*l'esprit apprend quelque chose de nouveau dans l'invention du sujet, & dans la fidelle representation de l'action que le Peintre a prétendu faire voir*, Félibien, 1672, 3<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 157). The gaze thus focused essentially on the subject that had to be understood *all at once* (*tout d'un coup*), and on the composition, which had to be discovered *at a single*

*glance (d'une seule œillade)*, in such a way that all the parts “competed together to form a just idea of the subject, so that they might inspire in the spirit of the viewers, the emotions appropriate for this idea” (*concurrent ensemble à former une juste idée du sujet, en sorte qu'elles puissent inspirer dans l'esprit des regardans des émotions convenables à cette idée*, Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 19–20).

In this gaze the reason was opposed to a more sensorial perception that was intimately linked to the power of attraction of colour, effect and artifice. In an “inverted report” (*rapport inverse*), to use the terms of De Piles, it was no longer the spectator who went to the painting, but the painting that “had to call out to the spectator through the force and great truth of its imitation, and the spectator must go towards it, as if to enter into conversation with the figures that it represents” (*doit appeler son spectateur par la force et par la grande vérité de son imitation, et que le spectateur doit aller vers elle, comme pour entrer en conversation avec les figures qu'elle représente*, 1708, p. 9). It even has to surprise us, astonish us, “the Painting must attract the eyes, and force them, so to speak to look at it” (*le Tableau doit attirer l'œil & le forcer, pour ainsi dire à le regarder*, 1677, p. 80), to the point that “we cannot prevent ourselves from approaching it, as if it had something to tell us” (*que nous ne pouvons pas nous empêcher d'en approcher, comme s'il avait quelque chose à nous dire*, 1708, p. 8–9).

For De Piles, the fact of being touched was intimately linked to *vraisemblance*:

For the eyes of a man of spirit, even if they are new to Painting, must be touched by a beautiful Painting; and if they are not content, one must conclude that Nature has been badly imitated, and that the objects painted there barely resemble the real ones.

*(Car les yeux d'un homme d'esprit, quoy que tout noeufs en Peinture, doivent estre touchez d'un beau Tableau; & s'ils n'en sont pas contens, il faut conclure que la Nature y est mal imitée, & que les objets qui y sont peints, ne ressemblent gueres aux véritables.)* (De Piles, 1677, p. 20)

The question of three-dimensionality was thus crucial, just as that already mentioned of the need to see together the composition and colour as the painter had conceived them himself from the same gaze, for the joint action of these two characters created the impression of *vraisemblance*. The culmination of the expression of this effect which genuinely produced a tactile sensation was rendered by Diderot in his description of the *Bocal d'olives*:

it is that these olives are genuinely separated by the eye from the water in which they are floating. [ . . . ] If you approach, everything becomes blurred, flattened and disappears. If you step back, the forms are created and are reproduced.

*(c'est que ces olives sont réellement séparées de l'œil par l'eau dans laquelle elles nagent. [ . . . ] Approchez-vous tout se brouille, s'aplatit, disparaît. Eloignez-vous, tout se crée et se reproduit.)*

Diderot, *Salon de 1763*, [ed. 1980] p. 379–380

This new appreciation, which became a pictorial experience for the person looking at the painting, also generated a change in the conception of vision, which was no longer considered to be an act of judgment: the eyes did not lead only to an awakening of the spirit, but to the soul because “it [the painting] has the ability to shake us, and move our passions” (*il [le tableau] a la capacité de nous ébranler, & d'émouvoir nos passions*, De Piles, 1708, p. 450). Being touched by the painting was the most important thing “judging its good faith without wanting too much to be the Connoisseur, and preferring those that surprise us the most” (*en juger de bonne foy sans vouloir trop faire le Connoisseur, & préférer ceux qui vous surprendront davantage*, De Piles, 1677, p. 20). Certainly, De Piles did not completely disavow the judgment of a work, but this ability to touch the spectator's soul also allowed him to state the universality of the gaze, “as it [the painting] is made for the eyes, it has to please everyone, some more than others, depending on the knowledge of those who see it” (*puisque'il [le tableau] est fait pour les yeux, il doit plaire à tout le monde, aux uns plus, aux autres moins, selon la connoissance de ceux qui le voyent*, 1677, p. 19).

Vision was also at the heart of Du Bos' demonstration, in the comparison he made between poetry and painting. As the latter made use of natural signs, whereas the former made use of artificial signs, it could move us all the more: “sight has more power over the soul than the other senses. Sight is the sense that the soul, by an instinct that is fortified by experience, trusts the most” (*la vûë a plus d'empire sur l'ame que les autres sens. La vûë est celui des sens en qui l'ame, par un instinct que l'expérience fortifie, a le plus confiance*, 1740, p. 386–387).

Michèle-Caroline HECK

[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

## Sources

Audran, 1683; Bosse, 1649; Browne, 1669 [1675]; Da Vinci, 1651; De Laïresse, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1668, 1677, 1708; Diderot, 1763; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Félibien, 1666–1688; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Pader, 1649; Richardson, 1719; Sandrart, 1675 et 1679; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694].

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# F

Face ⇒ Air, Countenance  
Face painting ⇒ Portrait  
Fancy ⇒ Caprice, Imagination  
Fantasy ⇒ Imagination  
Fault ⇒ Liberty, Proportion  
Fiction ⇒ History  
Field ⇒ Ground  
Figure ⇒ Attitude, Caricature, Convenience, Drapery, Ground, Landscape, Portrait, Proportion

## FINE ARTS

fr.: *Beaux-Arts*  
germ.: *Schöne Künste*  
nl.: *schoone kunste*  
it.: *due arti*

**Mechanical art, liberal art, painting, artist, sculpture, paragone, taste, imitation, judgement, genius**

*The term fine arts is a relative newcomer to the artistic vocabulary. The concept of a distinct category of fine arts becomes increasingly common during the Enlightenment period, and reference to it is made in theoretical*



*and historical texts of that period in several European languages. The term did not however arise from nothing—the idea of the fine arts was being elaborated and worked out throughout the Early Modern period, building on foundations that had been laid during the Italian Renaissance. Its development was not always straightforward, and it is interesting to note that eleven years after the publication of Batteux’s seminal text (1746), and four years after the publication of Lacombe’s dictionary of the beaux arts (1753), Pernetty did not include an entry for the term (1757).*

### Liberal Arts, Mechanical Arts and Fine Arts: a Slow Emancipation

Since late antiquity the arts (*ars, techne*, activities relating to human knowledge and learning) have been separated into two main groups, the mechanical and the liberal arts. Painting, sculpture and architecture were first included in the mechanical arts and thus considered servile. During a lengthy struggle—extremely ably documented by a number of modern theorists—artists and theorists showed that these artistic activities were closer to the liberal than the mechanical arts. Vasari (1550/1568) accomplished the change in status when he grouped the three arts together under the denomination *arti del disegno*. Other theorists laid emphasis on painting and sculpture, preferring the term *due arti* (Paleotti (1582)).

A further step needed to be taken in order to unify the visual arts in one group, distinct from the liberal arts, and to create what has been called “a modern system of the arts”, referred to as the *beaux arts*, fine arts, *schöne Künste* or *schoone kunsten*. The term came to be accepted during the Early Modern and the Enlightenment periods, first in France, then in England and Germany. It was adopted later in the Netherlands. However, the exact meaning of the term is more difficult to determine. By the mid-eighteenth century, painting, sculpture, architecture, engraving and drawing were almost invariably understood as belonging to the fine arts, while other artistic activities such as poetry, typography, music, dance, theatre and even gardening, were at times admitted to the group.

By the mid-sixteenth century, the term *beaux arts* was beginning to appear in French texts: François Sublet de Noyers was praised by Fréart as a man who had cultivated the *beaux arts*, namely architecture, painting, sculpture and typography (1650). Bosse (1667) enumerated Vasari’s three *Arti del Disegno* (1550/1568) when he dedicated his book to those interested in painting, sculpture and architecture and keen to cultivate the excellence of the *beaux arts*. At the end of the

century, Testelin (s.d. [1693/1694]) privileged an understanding of the *beaux arts* more closely related to the *due arti*, mentioning only painting and sculpture. The passage is remarkable also for its relative conservatism—Testelin seems to be reverting to earlier theories when he states that the *beaux arts* are to be equated with the liberal arts. The precedence accorded to the *due arti* of painting and sculpture is ostensibly confirmed by Sebastien Leclerc who in 1698 produced a celebrated etching showing the *Académie des Sciences et des Beaux-Arts*; an institution of this name did not exist, and Leclerc has apparently conflated the activities of the Académie Royale des Sciences and of the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture while omitting the Académie royale d'architecture.

The concept of *beaux arts* in the French language was of course bolstered mid-eighteenth century by the publication of Batteux's text (1746). Batteux established his theory of the *beaux arts* (painting, sculpture, poetry, music and dance) on one apparently simple principle, which owed much to Aristotle. The *beaux arts* all had pleasure as their principal aim, and they were all imitative arts, in that they imitated nature and her productions. They thereby differed from the mechanical (or useful) arts which merely employed nature and her products, or the other arts such as architecture and eloquence (joining pleasure and utility) which polished and improved upon nature and her products. Seven years later, Lacombe (1753) was to confirm Batteux's choices, although he did also include architecture among his *beaux arts*. His entry for the term *Arts (beaux)* is a model of limpidity and precision. He establishes a simple distinction between the other arts (useful) and the *beaux arts* (for pleasure or *agrément*). They are the children of genius, take Nature as their model (the theory of imitation), are the servants of Taste and aim to procure pleasure for the viewer. Lacombe does however introduce a note of caution—surely an allusion to Rousseau's *Discours sur les sciences et les arts* (1751)—when he warns that too much luxury or extravagance is dangerous; when the *beaux arts* exhibit these characteristics, they can easily corrupt mankind.

The editors of the *Encyclopédie* (1751) launched a robust defence of the mechanical arts—hence it is scarcely surprising that there is no entry for the fine arts in the work, even if the phrase is used from time to time. Watelet et Levesque in the *Encyclopédie* (1781) and the *Dictionnaire* (1792) revert to the concept of “Arts libéraux” to designate the *beaux arts*, although once again the term *beaux arts* does appear on a number of occasions in the text.

### England and Germany—Beauty and Utility

In England the term *fine arts* was used in texts as early as the closing decades of the seventeenth century, for example by Aglionby in the *Life of Giulio Romano* (1685) or by Franckenstein (1697), when describing the activities of the students sent to the Académie de France à Rome. Some years later, it featured several times in the English version of texts by De Piles (1706). In effect, it was thus through translations that the word first entered the English language. Vernacular authors were much slower to use it. A literary anthology (*Muses Mercury* 1707) and Gildon's treatise on poetry (1718) mention the fine arts, including painting. Humphrey Ditton's treatise on perspective includes the phrase "painting, sculpture and all the fine arts of imitation" (1712). However, it was not until thirty years later, that George Turnbull was to refer explicitly to the fine arts (the Arts of Design, sculpture and painting are named) in a text on the fine arts (1740). Some years later, the editor of John Evelyn's *Sculptura* used the term in his biography of Evelyn (1755) to refer to drawing, architecture, painting and sculpture. Chambers (1728) does not seem to have consummated the separation of the fine arts from the liberal arts, observing that the liberal arts include poetry, music, painting, grammar, rhetoric, military art, architecture and navigation. All of these arts are, it is claimed, worthy of being "cultivated without any regard to Lucre arising therefrom."

Sulzer (1771) included an entry on arts, fine arts (*Künste, Schöne Künste*), also published separately (1772) in which he insisted on the utility, social and moral, of the fine arts. In the very first sentence he observed that the essence of the fine arts (*Schöne Künste*) was the embellishment of the useful. This idea is then developed over the following pages. It is tempting to see here a response to the aesthetic movement, inspired by Baumgarten's text (1750) which tended to exalt the notion of beauty for beauty's sake, emphasizing the question of taste, and thereby relegating the notion of utility to a less exalted position.

Cecilia HURLEY

### Sources

Aglionby, 1685; Batteux, 1746; Baumgarten, 1750; Bosse, 1667; Chambers, 1728; De Piles, 1668, 1699; Diderot, D'Alembert, 1751–1780; Ditton, 1712; Evelyn, 1662; Franckenstein, 1697; Fréart De Chambray, 1650; Gildon, 1718;

Lacombe, 1752; Muses, 1707; Paleotti, 1582; Pernetty, 1757; Rousseau, 1751; Sulzer, 1771–1774, 1772; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Turnbull, 1740; Vasari, 1550/1568; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1791.

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|               |   |                             |
|---------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Fire          | ⇒ | Genius                      |
| First thought | ⇒ | Drawing, Idea               |
| Flesh         | ⇒ | Carnation                   |
| Fold          | ⇒ | Drapery                     |
| Freedom       | ⇒ | Liberty                     |
| Friendship    | ⇒ | Agreement, Colour/Colouring |
| Furor         | ⇒ | Genius                      |

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# G

## GALLERY

fr.: *galerie, cabinet*  
germ.: *Galerie, Kunstkammer*  
nl.: *kunstkamer, galerij*  
it.: *galleria*  
lat.: *pinacotheca*

### **Pinacotheca, cabinet, collection, exhibition**

*The term cabinet in French was first used in the 16th century to designate “A type of buffet with several storage areas or drawers” (Une espece de buffet à plusieurs layetes ou tiroirs, Dictionnaire de l’Académie française, 1694) In the 17th century, it was then described as a small apartment in which art lovers in particular stored their acquisitions. Depicted as both a room decorated with paintings, an expression of a collectionism then in vogue and a place of instruction, the cabinet was frequently confused by theorists with the pinacothecas and galleries in which works were presented to a well-informed public: painters, amateurs, connoisseurs or just those who were curious. This thus formed the early stages of what would be, in the 18th century in France, a major venue for exhibition and education: the Grande Galerie du Louvre, which became the Museum National after the French Revolution.*

*Although there are occurrences of the term cabinet in the descriptions of collections of works (Cabinet de Georges de Scudéry, 1646; Cabinet du duc de Richelieu by De Piles, 1681; then that of Mr Crozat by Mariette, 1741), they were very infrequent in the texts by theorists in the 17th and 18th centuries; only a few authors, such as Félibien (1676) or de Marsy (1746), gave a precise definition of it. It was thus necessary to search in the descriptions of Diderot's Salons in order to find more references and comments on the term.*

### *Cabinet, Gallery and Pinacotheca: Undefined Semantics*

In the 17th century, the theorists, and particularly Félibien, associated the term *cabinet* with *pinacotheca*. The latter term effectively came from the Italian term *pinacotheca*, which in turn came from the writings of Vitruvius and was translated literally as art gallery. There was thus a semantic shift, and the word *cabinet*, which originally designated a piece of furniture, was then used to qualify a room. The place that was given to this name thus took on a real function, linked ineluctably to the arts and in particular painting. In a dimension of exhibition and conservation, the *cabinet* was from then defined as a rather narrow, inside room that one “decorated with paintings” (*que l'on orne de tableaux*) and drawings, reflecting the concept of collecting that was gaining popularity in the 17th century (Félibien, 1676, p. 507–508). In parallel, in the same work, Félibien gave a precision about the term *gallery*, which he described as a room that was more spacious compared to a *cabinet*, but that was nevertheless similar as it had the same function. The gallery, a room “in a house that one decorates with Paintings and Statues” (*d'une maison, que l'on orne de Tableaux & de Statües*, Félibien, 1676, p. 605) was also confused with *pinacotheca*; this relationship created an amalgam between the terms *cabinet* and gallery throughout the 17th century.

Nevertheless, in the 18th century, a disjunction appeared, particularly in the writings of de Marsy. In his opinion, *cabinets* remained “places decorated” (*lieux ornés*) with curiosities and collections (Marsy, 1746, 1, p. 91–92); whilst galleries, which were always bigger, were rooms decorated “with excellent examples of Painting” (*excellens morceaux de Peinture*, Marsy, 1746, 1, p. 271), in other words, in which the vaults were decorated with frescos or a set of paintings. The author effectively referred to the Palazzo Farnese in Rome, as well as to the cycle devoted to Maria de' Medicis painted by Rubens for the Palais du

Luxembourg. The element of exhibition and visual pleasure is thus very clear; it is enough to observe the significant use of the term “decorate”, referring to decoration, ornamentation or pleasure.

### The *Cabinet* and the Gallery, the “*Petits Palais enchantés*”

Nevertheless, the *cabinet* did not simply present an aspect of embellishment, it was not only a pleasure for an amateur alone, but also, as Junius so rightly said, the *cabinet* had to be open to others so that they might have the opportunity to admire painting (1638, p. 81). Furthermore, when Richardson took as his basis the comparison between a library and a *cabinet*, as well as between painters and writers, he presented the collection of paintings and drawings as going beyond the simple function of decoration and ostentation; it also had to have several objectives, such as providing entertainment and instruction just as much as books did (Richardson, 1719, p. 42). From this same perspective, La Font de Saint-Yenne insisted on the idea of the *cabinet* as a place of instruction. According to the French theorist, the *cabinet* was a place presenting a variety of paintings and drawings, a diversity of subjects (history, landscape . . . ), with a significant role given to the Flemish painters in whom, in the context of a growing interest in the painters from the north, there was recognition of the delicacy, suavity, beautiful disposition of the effects of lights, or wise positioning of their figures, making it possible to forget “the lowliness of their subjects, for the most part crude, ignoble, without thought and without interest” (*la bassesse de leurs sujets étant pour la plupart grossiers, ignobles, sans pensées, & sans interest*, La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1746, p. 30–31). In definitive terms, *cabinets* were thus the “*Petits Palais enchantés*” in which it was possible to appreciate a variety of paintings, as much by great masters as by painters “excelling in animals, fruit and flowers, which is the most mediocre genre” (*excellens d’animaux, de fruits, & de fleurs, qui est le genre le plus mediocre*).

### The *Cabinet* as an Exhibition Venue

By thus declaring that the galleries (*Kunstkamer ende Galerijen*) were also places for practising one’s love of art (Junius, 1638, p. 81), Junius was later joined by La Font de Saint-Yenne, highlighting the idea that *cabinets*, by being “the admiration of Foreigners and the delights of the connoisseurs who live in this capital” (*l’admiration des Etrangers*



& les délices des connoisseurs qui habitent cette capitale, La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1746, p. 30–31), guaranteed the knowledge and learning of the painter. Effectively, from the second half of the 18th century, the authors hesitated regarding the status of an artist's production and his objectives. Already, in the *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture*, 1719, Dubos wondered about the destination of a painting which, in his opinion, was an object of delight, a sensory pleasure or one of an intellectual nature. He was then followed by Pernety, who specified in 1757: “The painting is not only a pleasant item of furnishing. It is instructive, it wakes one up, it encourages grand ideas, noble and lofty sentiments and edifying reflections [ . . . ]” (*Le tableau n'est pas seulement un meuble agréable, il est instructif, il réveille, il excite les grandes idées, de sentiments nobles, élevés, des réflexions édifiantes* [ . . . ], 1757, p. XXj). The concept of exhibition for artists and art lovers, the first seeds of which dated back to the end of the 17th century, effectively provoked one of the many debates dear to the hearts of the intellectuals of the Enlightenment, for the “Paintings exhibited to the public, exhibited for sale [ . . . ]” (*Tableaux exposés à la vûe, exposés en vente* [ . . . ], Marsy, 1746, t. 1, p. 236), inspired the artist or the public with knowledge and virtues. Ultimately, the narrow, private *cabinet* used as an exhibition venue was supplanted by the gallery, in which it was easier to walk around, until it became a sort of official place of knowledge, and particularly with the establishment of the Grande Galerie du Louvre. Like the Salon which trained spectators in how to look, the *cabinet* and the gallery had the aim of educating people and instilling them with taste.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

## Sources

Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Dictionnaire, 1694; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Félibien, 1676; La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747; Marsy, 1746; Pernety, 1757; Richardson, 1719.

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Gaze ⇒ Eye, Pleasure, Spectator

## GENIUS

fr.: *génie*  
 germ.: *Genius*  
 nl.: *genie*  
 it.: *ingegno*  
 lat.: *ingenium*

**Disposition, gift, inclination, fire, mind, spirit, wit, nature, furor, enthusiasm, talent, proneness**

*Within the context of art, the French term génie, stemming from the latin ingenium, constitutes the innate internal quality of an artist that allows them to conceive a work of art, prior to its execution. As such, it is closely related to theory and knowledge, as opposed to practice, as well as to imagination. In early modern art literature the term genius most frequently designates a specific quality within the artist’s mind, rather than his entire person in the current sense. The notion of an innate and internal quality that plays a defining role in artistic conception, alongside instruction and practice, stems from Antiquity. However, terminology only became more clearly defined in art literature towards the end of the Seventeenth Century, first and foremost within the context of the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture in Paris. Although the notion is certainly discussed, the term genius is almost never used in early modern German, Dutch and English art literature, with the notable exception of translations of French texts.*

## The Mind of the Artist and the Imagination

The concept of genius is inherently connected to the mind of the artist as the place where artistic invention and imagination take place (Fréart de Chambray, 1662, p. 11). As such, the term *génie* was preceded by related terms, most importantly *esprit*. Both terms, and their equivalents in other languages (wit, mind, genius; *Geist*, *Verstand*; *geest*, *vernunft*, *verstand*), continued to be used alongside each other, often as near-synonyms. The distinction between *esprit* and *génie* remained fluid, although from the last quarter of the 17th century onwards *génie* became more prevalent in France, arguably due to the standardization of the language of art within the context of the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture* in Paris. Although the French term *génie* was employed by earlier authors, Roger de Piles was the first to devote considerable attention as well as a prominent place to the definition of the concept of genius in relation to the artist, in the first chapter of his “*Idée du peintre parfait*” (De Piles, 1669, p. 13–15, and more elaborately: De Piles, 1715, p. 12–16). He opens the first chapter with the statement: “*Le Génie est la première chose que l’on doit supposer dans un peintre*”.

The term *genius* is almost never used in early modern German, Dutch and English art literature, despite the existence of the word in these languages in other contexts. Instead, more specific terms are employed to refer to the various connotations of the concept of genius. Indeed, the Dutch translation of De Piles’ chapters on genius (De Piles, 1725) illustrates the different meanings implied in the French term, as the translator chose a variation of Dutch terms to translate *génie* (Osnabrugge, 2017).

## The Origins of Genius and the Importance of Artistic Instruction

In general, genius is seen as a natural or innate quality and as such implicitly understood as given by God (i.e. divine). Genius is thus present in a person since birth and is impossible to acquire later in life. In reference to its origin, the term *genius* is often replaced by terms referring to nature (e.g. *Natur*, *aard*). The presence and degree of genius in an artist distinguishes him from lesser abled colleagues and artisans (Du Bos, 1740, p. 6–7). The idea, stemming from Horace, that the gift (*don*, *gave*, *Gabe*) is useless if it is not developed through instruction and practice, is frequently repeated in art literature (Junius,

1641, p. 36–37, 327). Paradoxically, it is argued by Dufresnoy that knowledge of the rules of art provides the artist with the liberty to work as he pleases (Du Fresnoy/De Piles, 1668, p. 4). Some authors, like the Dutch artist and theorist Gerard de Lairese, emphasize the importance of the development of the gift over its initial presence, arguing that genius gets wasted if it is not shaped by instruction (De Lairese 1701, p. 11). In this context, *genius* (and spirit) is generally interpreted as something distinct from the intellect (mind, *Verstand*) of the artist, the first being an innate quality and the second implying learned knowledge and rules. This distinction is apparent in the recurrent *topos* on the importance of “spirit, mind and diligence” as necessary and complimentary qualities for an artist. Variations on the terminology for the three qualities are frequent, especially in the Dutch texts, for example when Houbraken replaces spirit is replaced by *natuur*, mind by *kunst* (art) and diligence by *dagelyksche oeffeninge* (daily practice) (Houbraken, 1718–1721, vol. III, p. 135), again demonstrating the fluidity of terminology.

### Talent

The related term *talent* is used in a similar context, referring to the responsibility of the artist, his parents and master to develop innate genius. The term and underlying meaning come from the biblical parable about a master who gave his servants money—called “talents”—in order for them to preserve and augment the initial amount entrusted to them (Matthew 25: 14–25: 30; Luke 19: 12–19: 27). The notion that talent—the biblical currency as well as the aptitude—was given by a higher power is closely related to the use of terms that imply this notion of “gift”. Whereas the term *talent* is frequently used in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French art literature, it is rare in other languages, in which preference is given to terms like disposition, inclination and aptitude.

### *Furor* and Inclination

The term *genius* not only refers to the concept of an innate quality that guides the cognitive and imaginative faculties of the artist, it also comprises the notion of a forceful inclination (*inclination*, *disposition*, *neiging*, *Zuneigung*) towards art in general and specific elements of the arts, as well as of an unstoppable *furor* to create (*feu*, *enthousiasme*,

*libido artis, drift, kunstliefde*). Whereas this notion, in French as well as in other languages, is often referred to with specific terms, it is also implied in the term *génie* itself. This use of the term genius often includes an implicit reference to a certain hierarchy of universal genius over a specific talent or inclination for one element of art, in which universal genius is seen as extremely rare (De Piles, 1715, p. 13–14; *génie* is translated as *genegentheit* in De Piles, 1725, p. 12–13). By contrast, elsewhere Roger de Piles explicitly describes inclination as merely a complimentary reinforcing quality to genius and useless on its own (De Piles, 1677, p. 19).

It is the idea of genius as a brilliant person, driven to his art by an overwhelming passion, which would find most resonance in later centuries, whilst other connotations of the multi-faceted term would fade to the background. Enlightenment and Romanticism would likewise give rise to the use of the term in reference to the entire persona—as a *pars pro toto*—rather than one of his qualities.

Marije OSNABRUGGE

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## GENRE

fr.: *genre*  
germ.: *Gattung*

### Branch, kind, subject

*Although today we tend to reduce the concept of genre to that of the subject, the ancient theorists remind us that artistic genres concerned as much matters of form as content and that, for this reason, no hierarchy of genre could ever be absolute.*

In ancient rhetoric, three “ways of speaking” (*genera dicendi*) were distinguished, depending on whether they were “low” (*humile*), “mediocre” (*medium*) or “high” (*sublime*). As a derivative of these oratory and poetic categories, the concept of genre, when applied to works of art, neither could not, nor should not be confused with that of subject:

The Painters rightly make use of the word History, to indicate the most considerable genre of Painting, and which consists in placing several figures together; and one can say, This Painter does History, that one does Animals, this one Landscapes, that one Flowers, and so on. But there is a difference between the division into genres in Painting, and the division of Invention.

*(Les Peintres se servent avec raison du mot d'Histoire, pour signifier le genre de Peinture le plus considerable, & qui consiste à mettre plusieurs figures ensemble; & l'on dit: Ce Peintre fait l'Histoire, cet autre fait des Animaux, celui-ci du Paysage, celui-là des Fleurs, & ainsi du reste. Mais il y a de la difference entre la division des genres de Peinture & la division de l'Invention.)*  
(De Piles, 1708, p. 53–54)

The “genre” of a work effectively did not concern solely what it represented (its invention), but also the way in which it was represented (its execution). There are kinds of subject just as there are kinds of colour:

In Painting, there are different genres of harmony. There are gentle, moderate ones, as practised ordinarily by Correggio and Guido Reni. There are strong, high ones, like those of Giorgione, Titian and Caravaggio; and there can be different degrees, depending on the supposition of places, periods, light and times of day.

*(Il y a dans la Peinture differens genres d'harmonie. Il y en a de douce & de modérée, comme l'ont ordinairement pratiqué le Corregge & le Guide. Il y en a de forte & d'élevée, comme celle du Giorgion, du Titien & du Caravage: & il y en peut avoir en differens degrés, selon la supposition des lieux, des tems, de la lumiere & des heures du jour).* (De Piles, 1708, p. 112)

From this point of view, it is necessary to call “genre” all the rules that specifically govern the art of representing a certain type of subject. When Roger de Piles stated that “the Landscape is a genre of Painting that represents the countryside and all the objects that can be found there” (*le Paysage est un genre de Peinture qui représente les campagnes & tous les objets qui s’y rencontrent*, 1708, p. 200), he thought about what a landscape represented, but also all the processes that allowed this representation to provide the spectator with pleasure, the pleasure “of making the Landscape seem the most sensitive and the most accommodating; for in the great variety of which it can be, the Painter has more opportunities than in any genre of this Art to content himself with the choice of objects” (*de faire du Paysage me paroît le plus sensible, & le plus commode; car dans la grande variété dont il est susceptible, le Peintre a plus d’occasions que dans tous les autres genres de cet Art, de se contenter dans le choix des objets*, 1708, p. 200).

If we remained with the ancient classification of the *genera dicendi*, it would thus be possible to propose a hierarchisation of genres in relation to the nobility or complexity of the subjects that it generally treated:

A History is preferable to a Landscape, Sea-Piece, Animals, Fruit, Flowers, or any other Still-Life, pieces of Drollery, &c; the reason is, the latter Kinds may Please, and in proportion as they do so they are Estimable, and that is according to every one’s Taste, but they cannot Improve the Mind, they excite no Noble Sentiments; at least not as the other naturally does: These not only give us Pleasure, as being Beautiful Objects, and Furnishing us with Ideas as the Other do, but the Pleasure we receive from Hence is Greater (I speak in General, and what the nature of the thing is capable of) ‘tis of a Nobler Kind than the Other; and Then moreover the Mind may be Inrich’d, and made Better. (Richardson, 1719, p. 44–45)

This classification by subject, however, is only one of the possible forms of hierarchisation and cannot be taken too seriously, for two reasons. First, there are general rules for all types of subject, the evaluation of which is more important than that of the rules specific to particular subjects (Richardson, 1725, p. 82). The harmony of colour

in an excellent landscape might appear better than that of a poor historical painting, and lead the critic to position the former above the latter, going as far as to believe, as was the case for the seascapes of Claude-Joseph Vernet, whose figures were so well chosen and so expressive that its author could “pass for a historical painter” (*passer pour un peintre d’histoire*, Baillet de Saint-Julien, 1750, p. 24–25).

Furthermore, beyond the expectations that were those of their clients, or which came from the mode, the manner in which artists chose in which genre they wanted to excel corresponded to two realities (Browne, 1675, p. 23–24; Richardson, 1725, p. 38). On the one hand, only the most accomplished artists were capable of becoming masters of the complex rules of historical painting. “Genius is limited,” (*Les génies sont limités*), explained Jean-Baptiste Du Bos, who took advantage to highlight that the excellence of a work lay more in the quality of its execution than in the genre to which it belonged:

Is it not better to be one of the best Landscape painters than the worst history painter? Is it not better to be cited as one of the greatest portraitists of one’s time, than to be a wretched arranger of hideous, maimed figures?

*(Ne vaut-il pas mieux être un des premiers parmi les Paisagistes que le dernier des peintres d’histoire? Ne vaut-il pas mieux être cité pour un des premiers faiseurs de portraits de son temps, que pour un miserable arrangeur de figures ignobles & estropiées?)* (Du Bos 1740, p. 72–73)

On the other, the choice of genre is also a matter of temperament: “Art can do no more than perfect the aptitude or talent that we brought to it from our birth; but art cannot give us the talent that nature has refused us” (*L’art ne sçauroit faire autre chose que de perfectionner l’aptitude ou le talent que nous avons apporté en naissant; mais l’art ne sçauroit nous donner le talent que la nature nous a refuse*, Dezallier d’Argenville, 1745–1755, t. I, p. ix).

Without considering that there men who are absolutely superior to others, it is neither possible nor desirable to construct a hierarchy of genres that can be presented as universal. A wise critic would seek rather to evaluate the quality of a work within the genre to which it belonged, that is, by taking into account the constraints inherent to its iconographical and formal choices: as a historical painting had to be “abundant” (*abundante*) and varied, whilst a landscape should be pleasant and “charming” (*charmant*), it was in the light of these criteria, and these criteria alone, that works should be judged (La Font



de Saint-Yenne, 1747, p. 30–31). Even historical painters, who were supposed to be universal, were not of equal brilliance in every particular genre: Charles-Joseph Natoire was admirable in “tender and graceful” (*tendres et gracieuses*) fables, but was unconvincing when he painted scenes of martyrdom (Baillet de Saint-Julien, 1748, p. 10). Paradoxically, then, considering works of art within their genre made it possible to free them of a blind hierarchy.

Jan BLANC

[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Baillet De Saint-Julien, 1748, 1750; Browne, 1669 [1675]; De Piles, 1708; Dezallier d’Argenville, 1745–1752; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; La Font De Saint-Yenne, 1747; Richardson, 1715 [1725], 1719.

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Gift ⇒ Genius, Painter

## GRACE

fr.: *grâce*  
 germ.: *Annehmlichkeit, Anmutigkeit, Anmut, Gratia*  
 nl.: *gratie, lieflijkheid, sierlijkheid*  
 it.: *vaghezza, grazia, piacevolezza, venustà*  
 lat.: *gratia, suavitas, jucunditas*

**Manner, Beauty, elegance, delicacy, delicatness, gracefulness, I know not what, charm, agreeableness, perfection**

“[ . . . ] wholly divine part; that few people have had” ([ . . . ] *partie toute divine; que peu de personnes ont eüe, Félibien, 1676, p. 393*), or a spiritual quality, grace had been an essential concern for art theorists since the Renaissance. It expressed in the most significant manner the act of creation, the quality of the artist (an innate gift) or that of the painting (perfection that surpassed nature). Leonardo Da Vinci expressed grace through the effects of light, shade and colours. Vasari thus frequently associated grace with the artist’s manner, that of his art, and more particularly with the definition he gave to the *maniera moderna*. Lomazzo used the serpentine figure and its movement to qualify this notion. These meanings were also found in the writings of the theorists from the first half of the 17th century in France. La Mothe Le Vayer (1648, p. 105, 107–108, 110) used the term as both a gift and a manner. For the theorists of the Renaissance such as Vasari and Lomazzo, movement, freedom or *sprezzatura* were the expression of grace, a perfection that surpassed nature. In the 17th century, the discourse focused on the differentiation between beauty and grace. It was not a distinction between two types of beauty, one more material or corporeal, and the other more spiritual, which would be the synonym of grace; it was the agreeableness that only the latter could procure. More than defining this indefinable quality, the essential question was to pin it down.

### Painting with Grace: Graces and Manners

The theorists developed at length the different means by which this gift from God was expressed, all whilst recognising that this quality (or “Talent of Grace” (*Talent de la Grace*), Fréart, 1662, p. 8) could not be acquired through study. Grace was what had to bring life to all works of art. Although it could not be demonstrated, it nevertheless had to “season all the parts of which we have just spoken, it must

follow Genius; it is grace that supports it and perfects it: but it cannot either be acquired completely, or be demonstrated” (*assaisonner toutes les parties dont on vient de parler, elle doit suivre le Genie; c’est elle qui le soutient & qui le perfectionne: mais elle ne peut, ni s’acquérir à fond, ni se démontrer*, De Piles, 1715, p. 10–11). To express the infusion of this quality in the different parts of a painting, it was thus necessary to use the plural, like Félibien: “Graces, in terms of Painting, one says to give grace to Figures; gracious Figures” (*Graces, en terme de Peinture, on dit donner de la grace aux Figures; Figures gracieuses*, Félibien, 1676, p. 610).

The rendering of the human figure, with the proportions and above all the movements and attitudes, was the part in which grace had to be the most sensitive (Van Mander, 1604, fol. 13; Goeree, 1682, p. 78–79). More even than the gesture or action, it was the symmetry and balancing, or the harmony of the whole, that bore witness in the most obvious manner to the grace of a figure, above all if it was in conformity with what Fréart called order (*ordre*), the Father of beauty which “gives grace even to the most mediocre things, and renders them considerable” (*donne mesme de la grace aux choses les plus mediocres, et les rend considerables*, 1662, p. 19), convenient, or produces the effect that one wants to produce (Vinci, 1651, Chap. CCX, p. 69–70; Lairese, 1712, p. 22–23). In the image of the human body and its limbs, the disposition of the figures also needed to be imprinted with grace, and for that, to be both free or liberated (Van Mander, 1604, fol. 17; Félibien, 4<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, 1672, p. 407).

The concept of grace was also cited in relation to colour, light and shade. Da Vinci attributed to light and shade the power to give to a figure a “particular grace and beauty” (*grace et beauté particulière*, 1651, Chap. XXXIV, p. 9; Chap. XLI, p. 10; Chap. LXXIV, p. 21). He also emphasised their role, as well as that of the harmony of colours and reflections, in the composition of the whole (1651, Chap. LXXXXIX, p. 31; Chap. CCCXLII, p. 120–121). This approach to grace was fundamental for evolution in the concept of painting at the end of the 17th century. It appeared as a counter-model to the idea of grace as it was established during the Renaissance, in particular by Lomazzo, who made the serpentine figure the paragon of this quality. This comparison was, for sure, returned to by Pader, who described the serpentine figure and its movement as “all the secrets of Painting, because the greatest grace of a figure is that it seems to move what Painters call the fury, or spirit of the figure” (*tout le secret de la Peinture*,

*parce que la plus grande grace d'une figure est qu'elle semble se mouvoir ce que les Peintres appellent fureur, ou esprit de la figure, 1649, p. 4).* The image was once again taken up by Browne (1675) and De Piles, who evoked the “waved outlines” (*contours en ondes*) of the figure for “these sorts of Outlines have a *je-ne-sais-quoi* and movement, which comes a great deal from the activity of the fire and serpent” (*ces sortes de Contours ont un je ne sçay quoy de vif & de remuant, qui tient beaucoup de l'activité du feu & du serpent, 1668, Remarque 107, p. 90*), but it was thus more to describe a manner. Just as fire and fury were the signs of grace, tenderness, gentleness and delicacy were synonymous with grace for Dolce, who then cited Raphael (1483–1520) as model (Dolce/Vleughels, 1735, p. 197–199). And Félibien, on the subject of colours, referred to the “friendship and convenience which gives to works of Painting a beauty and grace that are quite extraordinary, when they are placed appropriately next to each other” (*amitié & une convenance qui donne aux ouvrages de Peinture une beauté & une grace toute extraordinaire, lors qu'elles sont bien placées les unes auprès des autres, Félibien, 5<sup>e</sup> Entretien, 1679, p. 29*). These two, apparently contradictory, manners were also associated by Dupuy du Grez on the subject of invention, “the fire, expression and other aspects, the *je-ne-sais-quoi* that the Italians call pride, fury, terribleness: and finally, gentleness and grace” (*le feu, l'expression & quelqu'autres, je ne sai quoi que les Italiens apellent fierté, furie, terribilité: Et enfin la douceur et la grace, Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 287*).

Whether it was the result of a freehand drawing (Sanderson, 1658, p. 21–23), or the distribution and harmony of the colours (Sandrart, 1675, p. 63, p. 71, p. 84), for most of the northern theorists, grace expressed life and what was natural. For Sandrart, grace (*Anmut*) lay in the agreement between the expression of what was natural, reason, and the lightness of the hand (Sandrart, 1675, p. 61). Browne evoked “the spirit of life” when speaking of grace (Browne, 1675, p. 9–10). On the subject of a portrait by Van Dyck (1599–1641), Richardson expressed the difference between grace and grandeur; the former charmed, the latter inspired respect (“There is a Grace throughout that Charms, and a Greatness that Commands Respect”, Richardson, 1719, p. 65–66). The grace mentioned by the English theorist was not that of Raphael, nor that of the Ancients, but that which came from a very subtle artifice (“fine Artifice”), revealing the model as it was, with its age and character. In French art theory, the issues were different. Félibien stated that grace was rare in nature, just as it was in painting, but that

Poussin (1594–1665) had known how to find it, at the same time as beauty, because he had well observed convenience (Félibien, 1685, 8<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 332).

#### Grace and *je-ne-sais-quoi* (I know not what)

The question facing French theorists was that of the differentiation between beauty and grace. Junius had already established the difference between beauty and *gratie* (which he translated by *gracie* and *jucunditas* or *suavitas* in Latin). He defined it as the life and soul of painting, and attributed to it the ability to produce something that was more beautiful than beauty, because it is one. It was grace that contributed to the harmony or agreement between the different parts (invention, proportion, colour, movement and disposition). As a quality of the painting as a whole, it was diffused through the entire work and gave it life. Born of measure, it was based on measure. Finally, it had the power to inspire the admiration of the spectator, on whom it produced an effect and ensured that the work was alive (Junius, 1641, III, 6).

In the 1<sup>er</sup> *Entretien*, Félibien also discussed the question of grace and its differentiation with beauty: “beauty is born of proportion and symmetry, which encounter one another between the corporeal and material parts. And grace engenders the uniformity of the inner movements caused by the affections and sentiments of the soul” (*la beauté naist de la proportion & de la symetrie qui se rencontre entre les parties corporelles & materielles. Et la grace s’engendre de l’uniformité des mouvemens interieurs causés par les affections et les sentiments de l’ame*, 1666, 1<sup>er</sup> *Entretien*, p. 36–38). It was on this point that all the debates focused in France. The idea expressed was clear: the just proportions and harmony of the parts of the body alone could only produce “beauty without grace” (*beauté sans grace*). To produce an effect of grace, there was a need for the joint action of all the movements of the soul, which could be read on the bodies or faces and even give grace to a face devoid of beauty (1666, 1<sup>er</sup> *Entretien*, p. 36–38). In the second *Entretien*, Félibien spoke of grace in relation to attitude, and gave as an example the figures of Masaccio (1401–1428), which expressed force, movement, relief and grace (1666, 2<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 155–156). By defining grace as “a wholly divine part; which few people have had, and which can only be defined by saying that it is an agreement of beauty in the Figure, which proceeds from a certain turn

and nobility of attitude that is easy and specific to the subject, and which charms the eyes” (*une partie toute divine; que peu de personnes ont eüe, & qu’on ne peut définir qu’en disant, que c’est un agrément de beauté dans la Figure, qui procede d’un certain tour & noblesse d’attitude aisée & propre au sujet, & qui charme les yeux*), Félibien (1685, 7<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 209) once again linked the two notions: they were together, at the heart of his definition of *Je-ne-sais-quoi* which could be explained, but which “is nothing more than a wholly divine splendour that is born of beauty and grace [ . . . ] as the secret knot that assembles these two parts of body and mind” (*n’est autre chose qu’une splendeur toute divine qui naist de la beauté & de la grace [ . . . ] comme le nœud secret qui assemble ces deux parties du corps et de l’esprit*, 1666, 1<sup>er</sup> *Entretien*, p. 38–39). Certainly, Félibien spoke of charming the eyes, but even if he returned to this point in the later *Entretiens*, because for him, this *je-ne-sais-quoi* “consisted entirely of the Design” (*consiste entierement dans le Dessein*, 1666, 1<sup>er</sup> *Entretien*, p. 50), his discourse on what he referred to as charming the eyes remained very limited.

De Piles started with the same postulate as Félibien, stating that “Grace and Beauty are two different things” (*La Grace & la Beauté, sont deux choses différentes*), but his discourse on the subject of grace was more forceful than Félibien’s:

Beauty is pleasing only through the rules and Grace is pleasing without rules. What is Beautiful is not always gracious, and what is gracious is not always beautiful; but when Grace is associated with Beauty, it is the height of Perfection: it is what provoked one of our most illustrious Poets to say “And Grace even more beautiful than Beauty” (*la Beauté ne plaît que par les règles & la Grace plaît sans les règles. Ce qui est Beau n’est pas toujours gracieux, ce qui est gracieux n’est pas toujours beau; mais la Grace jointe à la Beauté, est le comble de la Perfection: c’est ce qui a fait dire à l’un de nos plus illustres Poètes, Et la Grace plus belle encor que la Beauté.*) (De Piles, 1715, p. 10–11)

It was no longer the harmony of the outer and inner movements that characterised grace, but an opposition between rules and what was natural and, through the importance it gave to the effect and the resulting pleasure, between the senses and reason. The pleasure obtained through grace was effectively all the greater because it was hidden. On this point, De Piles was in line with the thoughts of Father Bouhours, who published in 1671 the *Entretiens d’Ariste et d’Eugène*, and who questioned in the 5<sup>th</sup> *Entretien*, the effects of *Je-ne-sais-quoi* and grace in nature and art, thus performing a shift from theology

to art. For De Piles, the effect of grace acted on the spectator, called out to him, surprised him (De Piles, 1715, p. 10–11), and touched his heart. Grace could then be likened to the aesthetic feeling that renders sensitive knowledge or recognition of perfection or harmony.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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## GROUND

fr.: *champ, fond*  
germ.: *Grund, Feldung, Feld*  
nl.: *gron(d)t*  
it.: *campo*  
lat.: *campus*

### **Background, field, figure, colour, *chiaroscuro*, effect, mass, air**

*The expression ground of a figure designates the structure of the relationship between the figure and the ground of a painting. The latter is neither a neutral surface on which an object is seen, nor an emerging surface that disappears as soon as the first representations take shape. From the informal*

*status of the field, perceived as diffuse or undecided, an interactive relationship intervenes: the emerging surface of the field abates progressively into the background, whereas the event with the figures stands out. A middle ground is thus formed, stretching between the two opposing directions (towards the front, and towards the back); it is reinforced in the process by which the forms take shape, until it becomes an effect mechanism directed outwards (It. “spiccare”; Fr. “avancer, sortir”, Germ. “losmachen”). During this process, the surface of the field is reoriented from the vertical to the horizontal: what was initially nothing more than a plane stretching out behind the figure becomes a three dimensional surface, the ground or a plate on which objects can be placed. As the forms become more and more distinct, the background level develops new properties: it forms an extended field in perspective, serving as the environment, or the spatial envelope for a figure. At the same time, this environment is bound to the other parts of the space of the painting. In this way, the spatial fields form the intermediate spaces that create the distance needed for perspective in painting. The interactive figure-field relationship represents a dynamic spatial category that goes beyond the static presentations of an immobile, receptive area. The figure and the field are complementary moments that describe two aspects of the process by which the image appears. On the one hand, the field signifies the spatial mediation of the figures. On the other, the figures are themselves intermediaries (or supports), and may seem so flat that in turn they act as fields for the figures placed in front of them. Figure and space, material and immaterial which are perceived as opposing qualities, intermingle in the figure-field context.*

### The Heritage of Leonardo: the Double Field

Leonardo recognised a fundamental meaning for the *campi* in painting, where they are used as places for distinguishing objects: “*Principalissima parte della pittura sono i campi delle cose dipinte*” (1995, § 482; c. 1510–11). Vertical surfaces such as walls, hedges or the celestial sphere are used as the background to the figures in a painting. But people, or groups of people, can also form that of other groups (*un corpo che campeggi sopra un altro*; 1995, § 475, c. 1510–15), to the extent that they seem flat when the depth increases. For Leonardo, the *Campi circondatori* on the other hand refer to the murky, smoky air that surrounds figures (*aria circūdatricie d’esso corpo*; 1890, manuscript G, c. 1510–15, fol. 37r). This field is not specifically called the background, but is interposed between the air and the figure (*interposto*



*infra l'aria e 'l corpo*) or the intermediary (*il mezzo*). Leonardo described the dynamic space of the painting with the simultaneous directions of movements towards the front or the back as “*moto aumentativo e diminutivo*” (1995, § 9; c. 1500-05). In the passage from the late manuscript E, from 1513–14, he inverted the perspective of the distinction of the objects in the sense of *spiccare*. The extended, three dimensional space with its thickened (*rilevati*) figures folds in on itself on its way back, so much so that when the depth increases, the *campi* that surround the figures are once again absorbed by the same field of the painting as the one on which the space of the painting was created (“*e che i campi di essi circondatori con le loro distanze si dimostrino entrare dentro alla parete, dove tal pittura è generata*”; 1995, § 136). Dufresnoy seemed to adopt this rule in *De Arte Graphica* (1668, p. 61, V. 378–80) when he observed that in terms of colour, the figures that recede into the depth blend into this field (*Quaeque cadunt retro in campum, confinia campo*). The field of a painting (*area vel campus tabulae*) should be “*vagus esto, levisque/Abscedat latus, liquideque bene unctus amicis . . . coloribus*”, stated the painter. “May the field of the Painting” (*Que le champ du Tableau*), translated De Piles, “be vague, elusive, light and well united with friendly Colours” (*soit vague, fuyant, leger & bien uny ensemble de Couleurs amies*) (1668, p. 60). May the texture of the *Field* or the *Ground*, translated Drydens (1695, p. 51) be “clean, free, transient, light, and well united with Colours which are of a friendly nature”. The German translation by Gericke (1699, s.p.) clearly placed the emphasis on the double meaning that Leonardo gave to the term: “*Wer Grund und Luft am Bild will recht Kunst-mäßig halten/Muß weichend/mus gelind/mus lieblich beyde stalten*”. The Italian translation is anonymous (*da G.R.A.*) and very similar to that of De Piles: “*Che il Campo del Quadro sia leggiadro, delicato, leggero, e ben unito insieme*” (1713, p. 47). In the Dutch translation, however (1722, p. 107), Verhoeck focused on the role of the field in the composition of the spatial atmosphere: the *Grond(t)* is “*los, wykende, lugtig, en wel t'zamengevoegt met koleuren die met malkander overeenstemmen*”. In the poetic translation by Mason (1783, [1901], p. 335), this variant of the meaning is dominant: “By mellowing skill thy ground at distance cast,/Free as the air and transient as its blast”. When Reynolds commented this passage (1783, [1901], p. 336), he indicated that the field should “be in union with the figure, so as not to have the appearance of being inlaid, like Holbein’s portraits”. Given the efforts made throughout Europe to clarify the double meaning of field for the

painter's practice, the entry in the fourth edition of the *Explication des Termes* (Jombert) in *L'art de Peinture* seemed rather restrictive: "Field, it is said that a group of trees or a piece of architecture serves as the field or figure, when this figure is painted up on it", *Champ, on dit qu'un groupe d'Arbres ou un morceau d'Architecture sert de champ à une Figure, quand cette Figure est peinte dessus*, 1751, p. 320). Despite everything, it is fair to insist on the fact that the field refers to the difference between figure and field, and not the background—the back of the painting (*Derriere du Tableau*) or *fonds*—of a painting.

### Field and Mass

In the reception by Lairese, the complex conception of the difference between figure and field in Leonardo became an alternative model, thanks to two types of field. The painter can comfortably establish his figures—"by means of smoke or their backgrounds" (*door de dampen, of hunne gestelde achtergrond*; 1707, [1740], p. 230). Regardless of the appearance of the nature of the field against which one or other object is seen, the priority is that each object should be in its place. For painters, the result is the requirement of harmonising gradually fields and objects. In his conference in 1749, Oudry dealt with the figure-field difference in the sense of the second meaning, that is, in the sense of background that sits vertically and closes the space of the image towards the back. He discussed the figure-field difference using as an example the still life, in which he himself (see *Le canard blanc* from 1753, Cholmondeley Castle, Malpas) liked to choose extremely flat scenic places, impenetrable and closed hermetically to any opening to depth. The central perspective, with its spaces which could potentially extend into infinity, is almost impossible to highlight. On the contrary, light and colour thus determine the place attributed to the objects. The painter's path does not go from the object to space. Oudry recommended painting the background before the foreground, in order to control the way in which the object progressively stands out from the field. He recommended holding a sheet of a tone more or less identical to that on which the object retained will be seen in daylight. The purpose was to avoid two dangerous extremes—weakness and the hardness of contrasts. He warned particularly against those who optically separated a figure from the field: they would inevitably pierce this field, and, so to speak, drill a hole in the composition of the painting. On the contrary, associations and contrasts in the colours

that made the tone of the field show through in a latent manner, produce an effect that creates this tonal atmosphere in which the objects represented remain enveloped, even in cases of high contrast in the light and colour. As a result, it would be wrong to esteem that the field is only a secondary concern that becomes visible in the presence of a figure that focuses all the attention and is perceived as being in the foreground. The field remains involved in the presentation of a figure. It remains present; or, to use Oudry's axiom: "every object always retains its mass on its background" (*tout objet tient toujours sa masse sur son fond*). The mass is what supports an object in the composition of the painting, giving it its force and presence. Without mass, objects do not appear to be "really standing" (*être réellement debout[s]*), they seem on the contrary to be constantly "falling backwards" (*tomber à la renverse*) (in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. V, vol. 1, p. 325 and 337).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Conférences, [2006-2015]; Da Vinci, 1890 and 1995; De Lairese, 1707 [1712]; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668 [Dryden, 1695; Gericke, 1699, Anonyme, 1713; Verhoek, 1722; Mason, 1783].

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## GROUP

fr.: *groupe*

germ.: *Gruppe, Gruppierung, Haufen, Klumpen, Tr(o)uppe*

nl.: *groep, groepering, hoop(ken), tropken, troepen*

it.: *globo, globulenza, globosità, groppo, gruppo*

lat.: *globus*

### **Grouping, contrivance, chiaroscuro, mass, brunch of grapes, first glance, ordinance, repose, whole-together**

*The concept of group sheds light on the relationship between characters and objects, as well as that that binds the “main group” to the secondary parts, seconding it in a drawing or a painting. We talk of a group “when we can see in a painting two, three, four or more figures or other bodies together” (lorsqu’ on voit dans un Tableau, deux, trois, quatre ou plusieurs figures ou autre corps ensemble) according to the definition given by Bosse (1649). In the conference by Le Brun, “La Manne dans le désert de Poussin” on 5 November 1667, the concept of group was raised to the level of criterion for the central composition in the creative process. This meant that the spectator’s gaze focused immediately on the most important scene, “the main subject”. The composition of the groups was used “to bind it and fix the regard, so that it is not always wandering around a large expanse of landscape” (à le lier et à arrêter la vue, en sorte qu’elle n’est pas toujours errante dans une grande étendue de pays) (in: Lichtenstein and Michel, 2006, t. I, vol. 1, p. 161). The different groups are connected to each other in a logic that controls the direction of the gaze in such a way “that some [figures] act as a link and others as supports” (que les unes [figures] en sont comme le lien et les autres comme les supports) (ibid.). Assembling or uniting particular elements in a distinct group—sometimes, until the early 18th century, referred to as Haufen, Klumpen (Germ.) hoop(ken) (NL.)—and different groups in an “all together” (tout-ensemble) was specified by Dufresnoy in his *De arte graphica* (1668, p. 32, 123) on the light in the “bunch of grapes” which Titian (v. 1488–1576) is said to have used as a pattern. *De Piles* translated Dufresnoy’s phrase “Figurarum globi seu cumuli” by “Groups of figures” (Groupes de figures) (1668, p. 14–15). He described them as “a Concert of Voices, which, all together, support each other through their different Parts, make an Agreement that fills and pleasantly flatters the ear” (Concert de Voix, lesquelles toutes ensemble se soutenant par leurs différents Parties, font un Accord qui remplit & qui flatte agréablement l’oreille)*

(1668, p. 97). For Dufresnoy, the sight of disorganised assemblies (“*fervente tumulu*”) disturbed and irritated perception (“*confusio surgat*”; *ibid.*, p. 22). He turned away from naive voyeurism, as evidenced by Gaurico, when he recommended adopting if possible a view point from on high in order to envisage tumultuous scenes in the best way possible (“*in omni re tumultuosa spectaturi semper altum conscendimus*”; 1504, [1999, p. 206]). The artistic potential in the concept of group consisted according to Testelin (*s.d.* [1693–1694], p. 28–29) for clear and precise reading of the painting: “*various groups detached from one another composed of large parts so distinct that the gaze can easily wander around, and yet they are so well bound to each other that they unite to form an attractive whole*” (*divers groupes détachés les uns des autres composaient de grandes parties si distinctes que la vue s’y peut promener sans peine, et pourtant si bien liés l’un à l’autre qu’ils s’unissent pour faire un beau tout ensemble*). In addition, the groups formed contrasts as well as a “*diversity of movement*” (*diversité des mouvements*), which are the basis of the force of expression of a subject. It is the positioning of the groups in an appropriate place that is essential. Even in a “*subject in disorder*” (*sujet en désordre*), the painter can reveal a world that is “*well ordered and without any confusion*” (*bien ordonné et sans aucune confusion*). In order to achieve this, it was necessary to make a clear distinction between the main and secondary groups, as explained in the “*table on light and shade*” (Testelin, *s.d.* [1693–1694], *Table quatrième* (on clair et l’obscur), after p. 29): “*it is necessary for the main group, and even better the hero of the subject if possible, to encounter the radiance of sovereign light*” (*il faut faire rencontrer sur le groupe principal et le plus qu’il sera possible sur le héros du sujet l’éclat de la lumière souveraine*). Félibien (1685, 8<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 350) recognised a conceptual role in Poussin with regard to the evolution in the semantics of the group: “*Poussin’s maxim*” consisted of a “*good disposition of the groups*” (*belle disposition des groupes*). He named Leonardo da Vinci as the artistic model. Da Vinci had observed how people “*group together separately in accordance with the conformity of the ages, conditions and natural inclinations*” (*s’attroupent séparément selon la conformité des âges, des conditions et des inclinations naturelles*). Here, Félibien touched on the concept of group according to the social model qualified as a society of *Honnêtes Hommes* or *Honnêtes Gens* following Faret (1630). For Félibien, the group represented the society of the “*honest man*” (1685, 8<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 137), which expected of a painter a sort of conformity with regard to “*the quality of the people it represents*” (*la qualité des personnes qu’il représente*) (1685, 8<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 381). Reinforcing sensitivity for

its capacity for social distinction started to emerge. On the contrary, for Baldinucci (1681, p. 71) “Groppo, Gruppo” represented indistinctly a wide range of pictorial objects that the painter brings together (*unite insieme*). Aglionby (1685, Preface) gave the following definition, “Gruppo Is a Knot of Figures together, either in the middle or Sides of a piece of Painting. So Carache would not allow above three Gruppis, nor above twelve Figures for any Piece”. The antonyms of the terms group and grouping were the terms dispersion and distraction (Germ. *Zerstreuung*). The term of group was a key concept in the processes for differentiating the centralised pictorial composition, directed towards the front, that is, calculated in relation to the spectator.

### Coordination and Subordination. Staging Power

In precept XC “Del modo d’imparar bene à comporre insieme le figure nelle historie” (1651, p. 25), Leonardo da Vinci described the mission of composition in a *historia*. This mission was to represent the grouping of a crowd whilst retaining the situations, positions and movements of the individuals. Precept LXVII “Come si deve figurare una battaglia” (1651, p. 18) turned out to be very important for the evolution in the concept of group at the start of the modern era outside of Italy. This precept gave directives for the composition of a battle scene painting: “*Potrebbersi vedere molti uomini caduti in un gruppo sopra un cavallo morto*”. Fréart de Chambray (1651, p. 18) translated the collective noun *gruppo* by “troup of men” (*troupe d’hommes*), giving it the meaning of a battle formation. Chambray took a model for the use of the semantic from military vocabulary. Almost half a century earlier, Van Mander used the almost synonymous terms *groepen*, *hoopkens*, *tropkens* in his *Grondt der Edel vrij Schilder-const* (“*Van t’ordineren met verscheyden groepen, / Welck zijn hoopkens oft tropkens volck, te weten, / Hier ghestaen, gheleghen, en daer gheseten*”, 1604, f. 16r). In his translation of the lives of the Italian painters after Vasari, he spoke of “*groeypen der Peerden, vluchten*” (1604, f. 103r.) to describe a battle scene by Piero della Francesca (v. 1415–1492), a word-for-word translation of Vasari’s phrase, “*gruppo di cavagli in iscorto*” (1966 III, p. 262–263). In Van Mander’s didactic poem, the concept of group was also applied to images of battles or historical scenes. Considering the reception conditions, he mentioned a visual effect of overload: how, in painting, could he create a harmonious balance between scenes of violent, tumultuous combat and the requirements of good *ordinantie* in the spectator? The

representations of crowds (*hoopken*) of cavaliers in flight, falling over one another, fighting soldiers, lying sprawled or wounded were, for Van Mander (1604, f. 16v) authorised out of principle. What was not, on the other hand, were representations of crowds who, as in Michelangelo's *Last judgement* (v. 1536–1541, Vatican, Sistine Chapel) close off the impression of depth (“*Datter niet en zijn insichtighe ganghen*”). Groups moving forward and backward supported and accentuated the scenography of power. This is what Van Mander demanded: main figures that dominated the scene (*sullen uytsteken*, 1604, f. 18r) and those “who spoke to them must be humble, show themselves to be obedient and brood in the most vulgar places” (*In hoocheyt staend’oft sittende gheresen/Boven die ander: en die hun aenspreken/Vernedert/bewijsen ghehoorsaem treken/Ter verworpeijcker plaets’ en verknesen*). Van Mander demanded more than a faithful representation of the small figures in the context of concrete action in a *Historie*. The gestures of submission, the reasons for disobedience and docility, the relegation of secondary groups to the back row of the painting . . . all that served to illustrate the relationship of subordination. By means of the artifice of grouping together, a second painting was created, positioned above the context of the action of the *Historie*, the subject of which Lairese characterised openly as master-servant relationship. The spectator must recognise from the first glance what is “*een heer*”, what is “*Stalknecht*” or what can be found beyond the realms of acceptability (*buiten de palen der welvoeglijkheid, behoorlijkheid, en welstand*; De Lairese, 1701, p. 94). The master can abandon certain signs and characteristics. Even the important questions of clothing played only a secondary role. A king, a prince or a hero would stand out from those around him by his bare arms alone, his stature and the nature of his movements (*aan haar naakte Lichaamen, Gestalte, Beweeginge*, Lairese, p. 54).

### The Concept of *mass* in Parisian Academic Conferences

Antoine Coypel's *Discours sur la peinture* was written between 1708 and 1721 and feels like an echo of Van Mander. The fascination Coypel had for the disorder of colossal crowd scenes nevertheless revealed proximity with the contemporary aesthetics of the Sublime:

In battles and other tumultuous actions, abandonment, variety and disorder form the great character. It is where a beautiful disorder is an effect of art; but it must always be through art itself that this disorder must be characterised. In this air of confusion, which must it is true

bring into movement the spirit and the imagination, it is necessary to maintain tranquillity for the eyes by the connected groups, by the masses of *chiaroscuro*, and through the harmony and opposition of the colours.

*(Dans les batailles et dans les autres actions tumultueuses, l'abandon, la variété et le désordre forment le grand caractère. C'est là qu'un beau désordre est un effet de l'art; mais ce doit toujours être par l'art même que ce désordre se doit caractériser. Il faut dans cet air de confusion, qui doit pour ainsi dire mettre en mouvement l'esprit et l'imagination, conserver un repos pour les yeux par les groupes liés, par les masses du clair-obscur, et par l'harmonie et l'opposition des couleurs.)*

The expression *mass*, a term whose Italian equivalent, *massa*, had already been used by Leonardo da Vinci and Vasari, was directly linked to the term *group*. For Coypel, the term *group* referred to the composition of the figures in the *ordonnance*, and the term *mass*, on the contrary, referred to atmospheric phenomena with regard to the distribution of light and shade. This made possible a double level of observation: large surfaces covered in shade and light could be considered to be fields for the objects or groups of objects, and at the same time as the principles of contrast in a pictorial organisation of the whole. In the conference of 7 June 1748 “Sur la manière d'étudier la couleur”, Oudry summarised the concept of mass with the title, “L'Intelligence des masses” (in Lichtenstein and Michel, t. V, vol. 1, p. 334) and attributed *chiaroscuro* to it. The success of a painter depended on his ability to find the “right tone” (*justesse de ton*) that is, to not see the colour in itself, isolated from the rest of the painting, but to see it in its place (*bien vu dans sa place*, (*ibidem*, p. 328), as “the slightest displacement that we make to that colour would make it false and shocking” (*le moindre déplacement que l'on fait de cette couleur-là la rendrait fausse et choquante*, *ibidem*, p. 324). Mass scenes required clarity, without which the spectator's eyes would soon tire. The groups connected to each other served, according to De Piles (1668, p. 121–122) as “Repose” (*Repos*), providing the spectator's gaze with calm (*arrestent votre vue*) and protect it from fatigue (*le vue seroit fatiguée*). They make possible an overall view with a single glance, *mesme coup d'œil* (1668, p. 31), which Bosse (1667, p. 9) had already demanded in the past (“which can comfortably and easily embrace or see, one or the other, in a single glance”, *que l'on puisse aisément et facilement embrasser ou voir, l'un et l'autre, d'une seule œillade*). These concepts of visual reception were also of Italian origin. In his



*Libro Quarto* first printed in 1537 (1619, f. 193r), Serlio already asked for light and comfortable clarity, without which the eyes would tire (*senza faticar troppo la vista*). In an instant, the spectator could form an overall view of the work (*ad vna sola acchiata si comprenda tutta l'opera*). From the antonym concept of “group of dispersed objects” (*groupe d'objets dispersés*) proposed by De Piles (1708, p. 382; 1760, p. 292), W. Benjamin developed a new direction and made of this concept a foothold for a new conceptual evaluation of the notion of group. The dispersion of grouped objects provoked, in his opinion (1935, [1974, p. 503]), a “shock effect” (*Chockwirkung*) which came to counter the visual strategies of the direction of attention.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Aglionby, 1685; Baldinucci, 1681; Bosse, 1649, 1667; Conférences, [2006-2015]; Coypel, 1721; Da Vinci, 1651; De Lairese, 1701; De Piles, 1668, 1708; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Faret, 1630; Félibien, 1666–1688; Gauricus, 1504; Hagedorn, 1762; Serlio, 1537; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Van Mander, 1604; Vasari, 1550/1568.

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# H

Hand  $\implies$  Handling, Manner, Practice, Taste

## HANDLING

fr.: *faire, beau-faire, peindre, bien-peindre*  
germ.: *Manier, gute Manier, malen, wohl-malen*  
nl.: *handeling, doen, welgemanierdheid*

**Paint (to), manner, good manner, practice, technique, hand, palette, touch, brushstroke, well-painted, well-coloured, well-designed, well-disposed**

*The explanation of technique played an important role in the theoretical texts in an academic context. Félibien published a Dictionnaire des termes propres à chacun des arts in the Principes de l'architecture, de la sculpture, de la peinture et des arts (1676). Other theorists devoted chapters to the different techniques of painting. This was effectively a matter of providing the foundations of practice for painters, and allowing art lovers to understand the "how" of practice. But the importance of the passages on know-how also responded to more important stakes. Technique was thus no longer shown as a simple process, but was adapted to the requirements of time, and to the public to which it was addressed.*

### Technical Requirements and the Qualities of the Artist

It is true that the different techniques were presented in a very fragmentary manner, and often served other purposes than a simple explanation of the practice. The fresco technique, for example, was often used to define an expert and diligent hand. By insisting on the comparison with poets, the theorists placed the emphasis on the aptitude of the painter, in particular on his freedom or facility.

The qualities of diligence and boldness were also asserted by the artists practising painting on an easel. Sandrart recommended freehand painting (*freye Hand*, 1675, p. 72). De Piles rejected the “movement of a heavy hand” (*mouvement d’une main pesante*) and defined the “beautiful brushstroke” (*beau pinceau*) from a free hand, diligent and light (1715, p. 53). It was precisely this freedom that had the ability to bring life to the painting, giving it life and spirit (Smith, 1692, p. 83). This notion was not new, and recalled the rejection of application already mentioned by Alberti (1540, III, no. 61–62), and Dolce (1557). It referred above all to the *sprezzatura* that Castiglione applied to literature in the *Libro del cortegiano* (1528, I, XXVI). The rapidity of execution that accompanied this diligence was, for Sandrart and Hoogstraten, the fact of a lively, valiant mind (*wakerer Geist*, *wakkerheid*). This diligence also aimed to conceal the application. For it was indeed a question of dissimulation. The painter must work hard, but this should not be evident:

and this is the true and best way of producing a perfect work, when it is produced with great care, and yet nevertheless appears to the eyes as done with great ease: these works are thus usually full of spirit and life.

(“Und diß ist die wahre und beste Manier/ein vollkommenes Werk zu machen/wann alles mit großer Mühe vollbracht wird/und es gleichwol also in die Augen fället/als ob es ohne Bemühung geschehen wäre: dann solche Stucke sind gemeinlich geistreich/und lebendig.”)

(Sandrart, 1675, p. 72)

The concept of *sprezzatura*, which was essential for the theorists in the Netherlands and Germany, was associated with the opposition between the precise brushstrokes of the “fine painters” (*Fijnschilders* in Dutch) and the energetic brushstrokes or rough, uneven touch of Titian (c. 1488–1576). The nonchalance of the hand was recognised in the clean or precise painting of Gerrit Dou (1613–1675) or Frans van Mieris (1635–1681) for example (Angel, 1642, p. 56; Sandrart, 1675, p. 72;

Lairesse, I, 1712, p. 7) who sought to hide the effects of the brushstrokes and painted with minuteness. It was also recognised in the works by Titian and Tintoretto (1519–1594). More than the opposition, it was the complementarity of the manners that was privileged. Sandrart thus reconciled these apparently contradictory pictorial expressions, and put them into perspective through two manners of painting, working freehand and working from a coloured sketch.

As a result, the quality of lightness did not exclude the precision of the hand (*light and accurate hand*), which had to be the same whether the colours were thick or delicate (Richardson, 1719, p. 27). And the adjectives that qualified the touch or brushstroke often co-existed in contradictory lexical fields in which *douceur* (softness), *moelleux* (*morbidezza*) and *suave* were opposed to *léché* (meticulous), *fier* (proud) and *vigoureux* (vigorous) in France, and the *smooth* and *delicate*, to the *rough* and *bold* in England. This variety in the manners that had, for Hoogstraten, to adapt to the natural character of each thing (1678, p. 235) was also that which gave pleasure to he who had learned to look (Richardson, 1719, p. 10–11), particularly if it was adapted to the subject (Richardson, 1728, p. 165–166).

### Hand and Reason in the Exercise of Painting

The major change that took place in art theory in the 17th century concerned the involvement of reason in the manner and handling of the paintbrush, and the application of colours. La Mothe Le Vayer had already described in a very vivid manner the predominant role of reason in the practice of painting, and the link that united the hand and reason:

Without lying, the work of the brush depends much more on the head than on the hand [ . . . ] nothing must prevent us from stating that the spirit of Painters of repute seems to be entire, right to the tips of their fingers.

(*Sans mentir l'ouvrage du pinceau depend bien plus de la teste que de la main [ . . . ] rien ne doit nous empescher de prononcer que l'esprit des Peintres de reputation semble estre tout entier au bout de leurs doigts.*)

(1648, p. 100–101)

This link was without doubt established for drawing, as it had been recognised since Vasari that its origin lay in reason. Félibien expressed this clearly when he said, on the subject of drawing, that it was necessary for the hand to act with spirit (1672, *4<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 290). Aglionby

also established the relationship between the habit of the hand and the force of the Spirit (1685, p. 8–9).

The northern theorists made a transfer from drawing to colour. Sandrart was very explicit on this subject, and proposed a conception of colour (and its application) that gave the intelligence or mind a very important role, imitating that established between reason and drawing. The hand (*Hand*) and reason (*Verstand*) of the painter had to work in harmony in order to produce grace and perfection, and for a painting to appear more alive than painted (1675, p. 61–62). De Piles expressed a similar idea:

But this free Brush is nothing if the head does not guide it, and if it is not used to reveal that the Painter has the intelligence of his Art. In a word, the beautiful Brushstroke of the painter is to Painting what a beautiful voice is to Music; both one and the other are esteemed in proportion to the great effect and harmony that accompany them.

*(Mais ce Pinceau libre est peu de chose si la tête ne le conduit, & s'il ne sert à faire connoître que le Peintre possède l'intelligence de son Art. En un mot, le beau Pinceau est à la Peinture ce qu'est à la Musique à une belle voix; l'un & l'autre sont estimés à proportion du grand effet & de l'harmonie qui les accompagne.)*  
(De Piles, 1715, p. 53)

This idea was found in Coypel: “Admire with what art they are painted, and how it is necessary to think solidly, for the execution of the hand to be so precise” (*Admirez avec quel art ils sont peints, & combien il faut penser solidement, pour que l'exécution de la main puisse être aussi juste?*, 1732, p. 28).

#### From Well-Painted (*bien peindre*) to Manner *faire*

Giving greater importance to the brushstrokes, the expression *well-painted* appeared in the writings of certain theorists. Just as he had defined the well-designed as what is pleasing to the eyes, gives the impression that it has never been seen, and contains grace, associating a free, bold hand with grace, Sanderson defined the *well-coloured* as the manner of breaking up colours with imperceptive passages of strong colours in the darker colours as in a rainbow. But he associated with this *soft* and *gentle* manner the force of the relief that had to appear without sharp or flattened contours. The *well-coloured* had to approach the truth of nature, in such a manner as to deceive the eye *sweetly* (1658, p. 21–23).

In Germany and the Netherlands, the *manner* (*Hand, handeling, doen*) or manner of applying the colours and handling the brush the debate is intense. Certainly, the examples of Titian and Tintoretto were also often repeated. Van Mander (1604, XII, v. 27, v. 37–35) denounced their roughness (*rouwicheyt*), and preferred the manner of Dürer (1471–1528), or Lucas de Leyde (c. 1494–1533). But the debate was above all part of the current events regarding the painting of Rembrandt (1606–1669), and the use of a rougher brushstroke on the one hand, and the *fijneschilders* or fine painters on the other. Hoogstraten privileged work that was not finished, whilst warning of its great difficulty; this doubtless explains why he used in his works a much smoother manner (1678, p. 236–240). Sandrart also took an interest in this question, and affirmed initially that the manner of Dürer and Holbein (c. 1465–1524) was the best. But he rejected the rougher manner of Titian only for beginners, or bad painters or copiers (1675, p. 72). The presentation of the two opposing manners was in fact an introduction to the definition of a new meaning for *well-painted* (*Wohl-mahlen*). The precise and delicate manner was better suited to foregrounds, the second to the backgrounds that could be treated with broader, or even rougher, strokes.

In the definition that he gave for the word *Peindre De Piles* also sketched out an approach to manner through free and meticulous manners:

This word generally means using colours and in particular mixing them and blending them with the Brush. When this is done freely it is said that the work is well-painted: but it is said that it is meticulous when this freehand and the boldness of the brushstrokes cannot be seen, and that the colours have been blended and softened with considerable care.

*(Ce mot signifie en général employer des couleurs & en particulier les mêler & les noyer ensemble avec le Pinceau. Quand cela est fait librement on dit que l'ouvrage est bien peint: mais on dit qu'il est léché, quand cette liberté de main et cette franchise de pinceau ne s'y font point connaître, & que les couleurs y sont seulement noyées et adoucies avec beaucoup de soin.)*  
(1677, lexique)

He admitted that the most delicate paintings were not the most agreeable because they removed the pleasure of the imagination from those that looked at them (1677, p. 69). In the same way he considered that “It is not the correction alone that gives soul to the objects painted”

(*Ce n'est pas la correction seule qui donne l'ame aux objets peints*, 1708, p. 161). But he did not really appropriate the discourse on *manner*.

During the *Conférence sur le mérite de la couleur* (1676), Titian's *well-done* (*beau-faire*) was recognised, but put greatly into perspective by its comparison with Poussin. The former's *well-done* charmed only the outer spark, it only "blinded through the appearance of a beautiful body without considering what must bring it to life" (*éblouir par l'apparence d'un beau corps sans considérer ce qui le doit animer*, Testelin, s.d., [1693 or 1694], p. 35). The way Correggio dealt with colours was the other example mentioned by Félibien to define *well-painted*: "when a painter knows how to mix his colours, combine them and blend them tenderly, we call it well-painted" (*quand un peintre sçait mesler ses couleurs, les lier & les noyer tendrement, on appelle cela bien peindre*, 1679, 5<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 17–19). As much as the union of colours, this played a part in distinguishing an original from a copy (1679, 5<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 291–292). The French theorist completed his approach in the 7<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, whilst showing the limitations of *well-painted*:

it is not enough to know how to use colours with cleanness and delicacy; it is necessary to paint well, and with an easy, agreeable manner. And that very thing is not yet the perfection of colouring for the best painted figures are bland and languid, if the colour does not also contribute to bringing them to life and marking vibrant and natural-looking expressions.

*(il ne suffit pas de sçavoir employer les couleurs avec propreté & délicatesse: il faut bien peindre, & avoir une manière facile & agréable; & cela mesme n'est pas encore la perfection du coloris: car les figures les mieux peintes sont fades & languissantes, si la couleur ne contribuë aussi à les animer, & à marquer des expressions vives & naturelles.)*

(Félibien, 1685, 7<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 159)

The expression *Bien-peindre* (well-painted) seemed to disappear from the writings of French theorists in the 18th century. It is true that it no longer corresponded to the key issues of artistic literature, which focused less on defining a good manner. Thanks to the success of Rembrandt's work in France, the interest in the *manner* and brushstrokes increased. It was expressed in a very free way in the writings of Coypel, who described the pictorial qualities of works (1732, p. 27–28). More than the effect of closeness or distance, already touched on by Sandrart, Hoogstraten and De Piles, the theorists and critics thus evoked the effects of touch. It was no longer rough or laboured, but on the contrary, vibrant. Coypel's conference on 8 July 1713 (in: Lichtenstein

and Michel, t. IV, vol. 1, p. 72–89) marked a new approach to a manner that had to be seen:

A finished work is not only softening and being meticulous with it, with affectation and coldness. [ . . . ] To give a work its final touch, it is necessary, so to speak, to spoil it: that is, with light and spiritual brushstrokes, remove the bland cleanliness and cold uniformity. [ . . . ] It is effectively through a sort of divine fire that one must bring to life the bodies that one has regularly formed by the art of drawing and the charms of colouring.

*(Ce n'est pas finir qu'adoucir et lécher avec affectation et froideur. [ . . . ] Pour leur donner la dernière main, il faut, pour ainsi dire les gâter: c'est-à-dire par des coups de pinceaux légers et spirituels, en ôter la fade propreté et la froide uniformité. [ . . . ] En effet, c'est par une espèce de feu divin que l'on doit animer les corps que l'on a régulièrement formés par l'art du dessin et les charmes du coloris).*

The brushstroke thus acquired a status identical to that of drawing and colouring, before being once again forgotten in the theoretical writings of Du Bos and La Font de Saint-Yenne. But the term “touch”, as well as many terms expressing the manner in which a painting was done, found their way into dictionaries, and remained very much present in the descriptions of paintings (Marsy, 1746; Lacombe, 1752).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

## Sources

Aglionby, 1685; Alberti, 1435 [1540]; Angel, 1642; Castiglione, 1528; Coypel, 1732; De Lairese, 1712 [1787]; De Piles, 1677; De Piles, 1708; De Piles, 1715; Dolce, 1557; Félibien, 1666–1688; Félibien, 1676; Hoogstraten, 1678; La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648; Lacombe, 1752; Marsy, 1746; Smith, 1692; Richardson, 1719; Richardson, 1728; Sanderson, 1658; Sandrart, 1675; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Van Mander, 1604.

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Harmoge  $\implies$  Harmony (of colours)

## HARMONY

fr.: *harmonie*  
 germ.: *Harmonie*  
 nl.: *harmony*  
 it.: *armonia*

**Convenience, expression, tone, agreement, consent, mode, musique, costum**

According to Paleotti's post-Tridentine *Discorso intorno alle imagini sacre e profane* (1582, [1961, p. 371]), the composition of formal beauty reflected the harmony of the visible world. Beauty was the “*debita corrispondenza in tutte le circostanze a guisa di perfetta musica*” (ibid.). The “*armonia proporzionata*” of all the voices was known as *decorum* in Latin and *prepon* in Greek (ibid.). For Paleotti, proportioned harmony was an expression adapted to each object as well as its degree of dignity. This expression had an influence on the psyche of the person listening or viewing, which explains the responsibility of the artist. Armenini put forward a similar argument: when applied to the distribution of colours, musical proportions became a regulating principle. The relationship of the “*variétà di colori accordata*” with the eye appeared to be that of an “*accordata musica*” for the ears, that is “*quando le voci gravi corrispondono all’acute e le mezzane accordate risuonano*” (1587, p. 106). Armenini spoke of “*ordine diverse*” or “*diversi modi*” in colours (p. 105) to designate certain proportionalities. In the same vein as Vasari, he demanded of a “*ben divisata et unita composizione*” that it abandon the two extremes—that is, colours that were too raw or too soft “*non si vedranno troppo carriche né ammorbate*”; p. 107). Rivault's *L'art d'embellir* (1608, f. 125r/v) as well as Mersenne's *Harmonie universelle* (1636, p. 63) counted among the first examples of the use of mode in relation to the tones of ancient music theory in France; according to Mersenne, all

musicians were required to find the right tone and the mode necessary “for arousing the passions and affectations of these listeners”. At the start of the 17th century, the term *mode*, in French theory of art, designated the proportionality of the movements and clothing pertaining to local circumstances. For Fréart de Chambray (1662, p. 53–54), the *mode* was the equivalent of the *Costume* (“this *Mode* that the Italians call commonly the *Costume*”, *ce Mode que les Italiens appellent communement Il Costûme*), that is, “A *savant Style*, a *judicious Expression*, a *particular Convenience* specific to each figure in the Subject being treated” (Un *Stile sçauant*, une *Expression judicieuse*, une *Convenance particuliere et specifique* à chaque figure du *Sujet qu’on traite*). The concept of *mode* discussed by Poussin in his letter to Chantelou on 24 November 1647 was once again part of the continuity of tones from ancient music theory, and insisted on “a certain mediocrity and moderation” (une certaine *médiocrité et moderation*, 1647, [1994, p. 135]). This restraint focused on the importance of avoiding anything that could prejudice the effect of the subject. The aim of the artistic process was to reveal and reinforce each thing “in its very being” (en son être). The *mode* expressed the diversity of forms of expression (“a varied *je ne sais quoi*”, un *je ne sais quoi de varié*) which were proportional to the whole composition (“put together proportionally”, *mises ensemble proportionnement*). Only a proportionate whole was capable of provoking in he who regarded it the affects corresponding to the respective expressions (“a power to induce in the soul of those who regard diverse passions”, une *puissance d’induire l’âme des regardants à diverses passions*, 1647, [1994, p. 136]). Poussin’s concept opened the way for a theory of art oriented towards rhetoric and making use of the distinct expressive qualities of paintings.

### Expression—Appeal—Transmission of Image

In the foreword to Félibien’s *Conférences* presented in 1667 and edited in 1669, the concept of *mode* was associated with Poussin’s name. The relevant parts of the foreword pointed perhaps to the (lost) conference by Le Brun on 7 April 1668. The result is that in reference to the theory of ancient music, the “different modes” (*différens modes*) functioned as means of “arousing passions” (*émouvoir les passions*) (1669, Preface). The parallel between music and painting was obvious when the author wrote that, “in this *Mode* of music all the tones play a part in expressing pain or joy” (*dans ce Modes de musique tous les tons contribuoient à exprimer de la douleur ou de la joye*) (*ibid.*). As in the field of tones in music, it would be possible to talk

of “harmonious conduct” (*conduit harmonique*) (*ibid.*) with regard to colours: this conduct was composed of “degrees of force and weakness which encounter one another in colours” (*degrez de force & d’affoiblissement qui se rencontrent dans les couleurs*) (*ibid.*). The differences in the modes came from the differences in regional and local customs (“different habits and customs”, *differentes moeurs & coùtumes*; *ibid.*), which Le Brun confirmed in his conference on 5 November 1667 on Poussin’s *The Gathering of the Manna* (1636–1637, musée du Louvre, Paris; 1669, p. 97, in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I, vol. 1, p. 169). The particularities of the artistic landscapes from the Italian Renaissance, as of the Roman school (“more majesty and grandeur”, *plus de majesté & de grandeur*), Florentine school (“more fury and movement”, *plus de furie & de mouvement*) and Venetian school (“much approval and sweetness”, *beaucoup d’agrément & de douceur*), were synthesised within the concept of mode and attained a new historical pinnacle in Poussin’s work, as this artist showed evidence of equal mastery in every mode (“all these talents found together in our one and only French Painter”, *tous ces talens réünis ensemble dans notre seul Peintre François*; 1669, Preface and p. 78). In his contribution to Champagne’s conference on Poussin’s *Eliezer and Rebecca* (7 January 1668), Le Brun returned once again to the concept of mode in Poussin (“in the harmonious proportion of the Ancients”, *dans la proportion harmonique des Anciens*, in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I, vol. 1, p. 204). His argumentation was directed against the mixture of modes: because each mode had its own rules, “which could not be mixed with one another at all” (*qui ne se confondaient point l’une avec l’autre*), all “dissimilar [. . .] objects” (*les objets [. . .] dissemblables*) had to be eliminated (*ibid.*). The subject thus had to be designed in such a way “that it allowed the character to reign in all parts of his work” (*qu’il en faisait régner le caractère dans toutes les parties de son ouvrage*, 1670, [1903, p. 107]). By passing through figural movements, the *character* gained the entire formal structure of the painting and resonated in each part of the whole. In the conference of 5 May 1668 on Carracci’s *The Martyrdom of St Stephen* (in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I, vol. 1, p. 245), Bourdon also developed an overall conception of the effect of the painting: on the model of musicians, who use *harmony* to refer to the perfect tonal relations and their union, painters spoke of the overall harmony “of all parts of the painting” (*de toutes les parties de la peinture*) in the sense of an impression of a whole characterised by a harmony of colours in the painting. Testelin discussed the concept of mode in Poussin in his

“Extrait des conférences sur [ . . . ] l’expression générale et particulière” (1673). The mode focused on the choice of circumstances related to the appropriateness of the subject; it expressed the coherence of each part, taking into account the “sole idea of the main subject” (*seule idée du sujet principal*, Tetelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 20). Like Fréart and Félibien, De Piles (1699, p. 87, 93) used *mode* as the equivalent of the Italian *costume* (“Modes and Customs” (*les Modes & les Coûtumes*); “The Word of Art, which means the modes, times and places” (*Mot de l’Art, qui signifie les modes, les tems, & les lieux*), in agreement with the “General expressions of the subject, the Passions of the Soul in particular” (*Expression générales du sujet, des Passions de l’Ame en particulier*). After Le Brun and Bourdon used character (*caractère*) as a synonym for mode in terms of the expression of passions (1668, in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I, vol. 1, p. 242), a terminological slide could be observed in Coypel’s *Discours sur la peinture* (1708–21). The concept of mode tended to be replaced there by that of character: “each painting must have a mode that characterises it. The harmony of it will be sometimes bitter and sometimes sweet, sometimes sad and sometimes happy, depending on the different characters of the subjects” (*chaque tableau doit avoir un mode qui le caractérise. L’harmonie en sera tantôt aigre et tantôt douce, tantôt triste et tantôt gaie, selon les différents caractères des sujets*, in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. IV vol. 1, p. 144). The semantic evolution at work in Coypel’s text was founded on the pretense of truth (“real and varied characters”, *des caractères vrais et variés, ibid.*). The concept of character (*caractère*) or characteristic (*caractéristique*) were based on ethics developed in European aesthetics of the 18th century, and attributed a large place to the diversities of expression (including what was foreign). This new sense given to the notion of characteristic (*caractéristique*), although developed from the notions of harmony, proportion and costume, was linked to a need for nature and truth, and was to replace, in the context of *Sturm und Drang*, the importance given to harmonious conformity. According to the young Goethe (1772, [1998, p. 117]), the feeling for a harmony of the masses and purity of forms (*die Harmonie der Massen, die Reinheit der Formen*) was a conception that belonged to the past. Art had to be true and induce an “intimate, united, personal and autonomous” sensation (*inniger, einiger, eigner, selbständiger Empfindung*). The criticism focused particularly on the *costume* (*Kostüm*) which, by recreating a theatrical world, was even considered to be very harmful (1772, [1998, p. 73]). Lenz also defended the *characteristic* of an expression, and thus esteemed ten

times more the caricaturist painter than the idealist painter (1774, [1987, p. 653]): exaggeration and distortion of an object were, for him, the means to create an antithetic form whose aim was to render recognisable the disproportions in relation to the whole.

### Ambiances of Images: the Rhetoric of Colours and Light

For Le Brun, the basic concept of the theory of expression was the “unity of action” (taken from the theory of dramatic art), which excluded all that was contrary to the coherent representation of a historic subject. Only the unity of action, held by a homogenous conception of the painting, guaranteed the full attention and participation of the spectator (in: Félibien, 1669, p. 105). The “beautiful harmony” (*belle harmonie*) capable of moving the spectator arose only when the movements, gestures and facial expressions were in conformity with the requirements of *history* (Félibien, 1669, p. 84). Human bodies, or groups of human bodies, in movement transported expression. The spatial structure in which they were included functioned like a sort of resonance chamber: on the subject of Poussin’s *The Gathering of the Manna* (1636–1637, musée du Louvre, Paris), Le Brun wrote that even the air was so pale and lifeless “that it imprinted sadness” (*qu’il imprime de la tristesse*, Félibien, 1669, p. 82). In the conference on 3 December 1667 on Poussin’s *The Healing of the Blind* (1650, musée du Louvre, Paris), Bourdon explained the spatial modalities of the colours and light. In his opinion, the landscape area in Poussin’s work was an incomparable “marvellous agreement that has spread over all [the colours] a universal shade of light”, *accord merveilleux, ayant répandu sur toutes [les couleurs] une teinte universelle de la lumière*, in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I, vol. 1, p. 184). In Loir’s conference on 4 August 1668 on Poussin’s *Winter (the Deluge)*, (1660–1664, musée du Louvre, Paris), the explicit function of the colour and light was to convey expression (“the expression of light, and that of colour”, *l’expression de la lumière, et celle de la couleur; ibid.*, in Félibien, 1669, p. 256). In Poussin’s painting, the action moved into the background. It was subordinate to the landscaped area, as well as to the dominant expression of the colour, light and shade of the air. The colours “all have the general shade of the air”, (*tiennent toutes de la teinte générale de l’air*, in: Félibien, 1669, p. 225). This “general shade” (*teinte générale*) was characteristic of the ambiance of the painting. In his groundbreaking study of light from 9 February 1669 (*Sur la lumière*),

Bourdon re-assessed the modalities of light at different times of day: they were capable of conveying expression. Man's moods were put in touch with the mode and attributed to the time of day: "These six parts of the day were all [ . . . ] the more necessary given that each had its own mystery or particular nature" (*Que ces six parties du jour étaient d'autant [ . . . ] plus nécessaires que chacune avait son mystère ou son caractère particulier*, in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I, vol. 1, p. 294). His division of the day into six periods broke with the traditional four periods of the day, as well as with their symbolic relationship with the four ages of life. The division into six periods established by Bourdon echoed the expression of the six emotions in Descartes' treatise on *Les passions de l'âme* (1649, art. 69). Descartes' joy corresponded to the character of the sunrise ("the hour at which the sun rises [ . . . ] spreads the most joy on all of nature", *l'heure du soleil levant [ . . . ] répand le plus de joie sur toute la nature*); the stormy light between sunrise and midday "bears the traits of sadness" (*qui portent un caractère de tristesse*) and thus corresponded to sadness; desire corresponded to the sunset, an invitation for a "pleasant and much-desired retreat" (*retrait agréable et désirée*) (in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I, vol. 1, p. 301). Bourdon gave new meaning to the afternoon ("maladjusted and variable", *déreglée et variable*), which was perfectly appropriate for bucolic sensuality ("it is suited to dealing with bacchanalia, games, frolics and pleasant exercises", *elle est propre à traiter des bacchantes, des jeux, des folâtreries et des exercices plaisantes, ibid.*). The afternoon was the painter's time of freedom ("it provides painters with agreeable freedoms", *elle fournit d'agréables libertés aux peintres, ibid.*). This mode was quite similar to admiration which, for Descartes, was synonymous with "a sudden surprise for the soul" (*une subite surprise de l'âme*) in the face of "rare and extraordinary" (*rare et extraordinaires*) phenomena (1649, art. 70). A new perspective was developing: the light and expressive power of the colours could provoke a very wide range of moods. Their effects were deployed temporarily and independently of the scenic relationship with the action of the story. "A glance at a painting," summarised Coypel, "should determine its character" (*Le coup d'œil d'un tableau doit déterminer son caractère*, in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. IV, vol. 1, p. 47).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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## HARMONY (OF COLOURS)

fr.: *harmonie (des couleurs)*  
 germ.: *Harmonie, Universal-harmonie*  
 nl.: *harmony*  
 it.: *armonia*  
 lat.: *harmonia*

**Union, friendship, antipathy, concord, discord, tint, half-tint, harmoge, diminution, houding, light**

*Sandart (1675, p. 84) defined the “union in painting” (“Vereinigung in der Mahlerey”) as “a discordance and a conflict of different colours” (“eine Uneinigkeith und Zweyspalt manigfaltiger Farben”). The harmony of colours was characterised by the agreement of varied impressions of colour, in the sense of a concordia discors. Sandart borrowed his definition from Vasari’s theoretical introduction (“La unione nella pittura è una discordanza di colori diversi accordati insieme”; 1550, [1966 I, p. 124]). Like Vasari, Sandart privileged the presentation of a few practical examples of harmonious associations of colours over a list of general principles for a theory of colour harmony: birds’ feathers, shells and bouquets of flowers instructed painters in the order and appropriateness of colours in nature. The unequalled model of all harmony of colour could be found in the fluid and almost imperceptible transitions between the colours of the rainbow. Colours that were too contrasted or too raw should be avoided, as they clashed too violently with each other, like in an “inlaid, mottled carpet” (“scheckichten und gesprengten Teppich”) or in “painters of playing cards and dyers” (“Kartenmahlern und Färbern”, 1675, p. 63 et 85). These comparisons were also borrowed from Vasari (“un tappeto colorito o un paro di carte”, 1550, [1966, I, p. 126]). Sandart referred to music theory when he defined harmony as an agreement of the whole: just one “false note” (“falscher tonus”, 1675, p. 63) was enough to spoil the effect of the whole. A clever mix of colours and the reduction of their crudeness (Sandart, 1675, p. 85) allowed painters to avoid the “discordance of a painting” (“Discordanz eines Gemähls”). To do this, it was important to monitor the right “decrease” (“Disminuierung”), that is, the fact that the harmony of colours develops from the principle of proportional attenuation of bright colours. It was only when colours “become lost” (“sich verliere[n]”) “according to the rules of light” (“nach den Regeln des Liechts”), that is, “little by little/to the perfect degree” (“nach und nach/in gerechter Maße”) that a structured chiaroscuro colour gradient could be formed, in an ordered space where each tone obtained importance or a “place” (“Ort”), and where everything “resembled nature” (“alles der Natur ähnlich”; *ibid.*). Vasari also pronounced himself against the *dissonanza o durezza* (1550, [1966] I, p. 126) of colours. He applied the decrease (*diminuendo a lo indentro*; 1550, [1966] I, p. 125) to the positions of subordinate groups of figures so as to avoid any optical confusion regarding the main group. Vasari named two evils of equal seriousness that it was necessary to avoid: on the one hand, the “*colori troppo carichi o troppo crudi*”, which he experienced as harsh and loud, and, on the other, excessive sweetness (*troppo dolce*), making things pale, old and smoky (*pare una cosa spenta, vecchia et affumicata,**



1550, [1966], p. 127). The painter was encouraged to find a balance between the raw and pale colours. This was without doubt what Lairesse was referring to when he warned against the two dangerous pitfalls that painters should avoid, that is, “raw multi-colour” (“raauwe bontigheid”) and excessive “softness” (“murwheid”); this tended towards “maturity and decay” (“ryp en rottigheid”, 1707, [1740], p. 42).

### The Tonal Harmonies of Halftones

Van Mander—and after him Junius and Hoogstraeten—also criticised the chessboard effect of colours. Italian halftones (*d’Italy Mezza tinten*; 1604, f. 18v) made it possible to remedy this: the back parts in halftones gently attenuated and disappeared into the mist (*bedommelt*; 1604, f. 18v). Following on from Van Mander, Sandrart spoke of “halftones or halfshades” (*mezze tinten oder halbe Schatten*, 1675, p. 73). The Italian expression had a number of synonyms and equivalents: Bosse (1649, n.p.) indicated that “tone and halftone should be understood as the decrease in force, or weakening of one colour to another” (*Teinte et demi-teinte doivent être entendus de la diminution de force, ou affaiblissement d’une couleur à une autre*). In his translation of Leonardo, Chambray (1651, p. 38, 111) used “halftone” (*demi-teinte*) to translate “mezzana oscurità” and “ombra mezzana”. Böhm, Leonardo’s German translator (1724, p. 5, 95, 125), spoke of “intermediary colour” (*Mittelfarbe*) and (like Sandrart) of “halfshades” (*halbe Schatten*). This was an ancient concept. In Cennini’s *Libro dell’arte* (xxlx), he spoke of “*gli scuri, e mezzani, e bianchetti*”; in *De pictura* (1435, [1973 III, p. 84]), Alberti used “*mezzo colore*”; Vasari mentioned the “*colore mezzano tra il chiaro e lo scuro*” (1550, [1966 I, p. 113]). Van Mander’s semantic resource can be found in the work of Michiel and his *Notizia d’opera del disegno*, written between approximately 1520 and 1543, and in which features the expression “*uniti cun le meze tente*” (1888, p. 80). Lairesse used “*tusschenmiddel*” or “*tusschen-tint*” (1701 [1740, p. 272]): these shades united parts of the painting that were “in conflict” (*strydig*) or which aggressed strongly from the point of view of the distribution of shade and light. The intermediary or medium shades softened (*verzachten*) the differences and made them blend into one another.

### Harmony and *Houding* or *Haltung*

In the third volume of *De pictura veterum*, Junius explained the good vicinity of colours using the example of the rainbow. For the most varied colours to blend gradually and almost imperceptibly into each other, painters had to trace the outlines of bodies (*corporum terminos*) with gentleness and lightness such that the eye believed that it was seeing what it was not, that is, how through a deceptive alignment the lines shrank away, as if they were disappearing into space (“*fallaci fugâ teneriter subducentibus, evanescentibus, & quasi in fumum abcuntibus*”; 1637, p. 172–73). The criteria that Junius thus turned to were *tonus* and *harmoge* from Pliny (*Historia Naturalis*, 35, 29)—two terms borrowed from music theory. As the distinct luminosity of light, the *tonus* was called “*schijnsel*” (1641, p. 268) in the Dutch translation. This term had already been used by Van Mander in the *Vita* of Rosso (1604, [1618, f. 61r]). Hoogstraeten (1678, p. 257) returned to the distinction between “*lux (licht)*” and “*Lumen (schijnsel)*”; he considered it to be a philosophical question that was of no interest to artists. Clearly, he was unaware of the difference that Leonardo had established between *luce*, an immaterial source of light or a luminous ray, and *lume*, which was understood as the luminosity applied or received at the surface of the bodies. The Dutch translation that Junius proposed of *harmoge* was the start of a vast perspective of meanings. He chose the example of the optical union of the sky and the sea at the level of the horizon. In this passage, he speaks of “*verschiet der verwen*” (*het selvighe wierd Harmoge geheesen*; 1641, p. 268). The terms *verschiet/verschieten* (Germ. *Verschieß(ung)*, *verschießen*) and their semantic correlate (*wech*)*wijking* (Germ. (*Zurück*)*Weichung*); Fr. *recul*) were the fundamental concepts of the theories of *Haltung* in the 17th and early 18th centuries. The German translators of Goeree, Zezen (1669) and Lang (1677) ignored the use of *Haltung* as a German equivalent for *Houding*, and translated the Dutch term by “*Verschiessen*” (*Das Verschiessen oder Perspectiv der Dunckelheit und des Lichtes*; 1669, p. 67; 1677, p. 131). This semantic rapprochement was prepared in Junius’ third volume. It was necessary to speak of *verschiet der verwen* when these “*sachteliek in malckander schijnen to vloeyen*” (1641, p. 269); *houdinghe* bound things together in such a way that they were bound so strongly and so deeply that they were associated with one another and seemed to mix together gently, “*ghmackelick op malckander schijnen te passen en sachtelick in malckander schijnen in te vloeyen*” (1641, p. 308). His Dutch translation of the

concept of Pliny's *harmoge*, *verschiet*, was the semantic resource that closely linked *Houding* and harmony. For Sandrart, this link described what Rembrandt (1606–169) had accomplished in painting (“a union of visual harmony”; *Zusammenhaltung der universal-Harmonia*; 1675, p. 326). For Hoogstraeten (“Van de Houding, Samenstemming, of Harmonie in't koloreeren”; 1678, p. 300) and Lairesse (“Van de *Harmonie* of Houdinge der Koleuren”; 1740, p. 227), both concepts formed an inseparable unity. At the same time, Junius gave the initial impetus to a shift in meaning for the contemporary representation of harmony. In the English version of the text (1638, [1991, p. 229]), he used the redundant expression, “concinntie of Harmonie” (Dutch: *ghevoeghlicheydt deser Harmonie*; 1641, p. 248). The use of *concinntitas* refers to Alberti's conception of harmony as an agreement and as a harmonious integration of all the parts of a whole body (“*concinntitas universarum partium in ea*”; 1485, f. 93v), which no longer needs us to add or remove anything at all. Junius nevertheless referred to Philostrate, who understood by “band of Harmony” the convenient union (*communio*) of all the parts of a body. Hoogstraeten referred to this passage in Junius' text; in his *Hooge Schoole*, these terms, “Symmetry, analogy, harmony” (*Simmetrie, Analogie, Harmonie*) were nevertheless used to designate “*het wel schicken der koleuren*” or *houding* (1678, p. 300). When *Haltung* started to dominate, the bodily representation of harmony became a spatial concept that ordered the relationships between colours in function of their depth. Harmony in the sense of *Haltung* was the ordered union of colours, which was established gradually, thanks to the spatial transitions between the perspective planes whose structure appeared coherent and that the eye could sweep over naturally.

Hans-Joachim DETHLEFS

[Translated by Kristy Snaith]



## Sources

Alberti, 1435 [1540], 1485; Bosse, 1649; Cennini, v. 1400 [1971]; Da Vinci, 1651; De Lairesse, 1707 [1740]; Goeree, 1668 [1670 b]; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Michiel, s.d. [1888]; Van Mander, 1604; Sandrart, 1675 et 1679; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Vasari, 1550/1568.

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## HISTORY

fr.: *histoire, peinture d'histoire*  
 germ.: *Historienmalerei, Historie*  
 nl.: *historie, geschiedenis*  
 it.: *storia, istoria*

**History painting, history-piece, story, historical composure, subject, action, fable, expression, fiction**

*History painting was the pinnacle of painting in that it supposed mastery of all of its parts, but history was also a meeting place of conflict, between the logic of the text that was used most of the time as the source of the history painted, and the logic of the image, which had to make the effect prevail over the content.*

In the literature on art, there are few definitions of what we call “history” or, more rarely, “history painting”. André Félibien was one of the first to make an attempt:

History among the Painters. There are those who occupy themselves with representing various things, like Landscapes, Animals, Buildings and human Figures. The most noble of all these types is the one that represents something from History through a composition of several figures. And these sorts of Painting are called History. This is what Vitruvius referred to as Megalographia, that is, a Painting of importance. (*Histoire parmy les Peintres. Il y en a qui s'occupent à représenter diverses choses. Comme des Paisages, des Animaux, des Bastimens, & des Figures humaines. La plus noble de toutes des especes est celle qui represente quelque Histoire par une composition de plusieurs figures. Et ces sortes de Peintures*

*s'appellent Histoire. C'est de que Vitruvius Nomme Megalographia, c'est-à-dire, une Peinture d'importance),*

[1676, p. 618–619]; see also Aglionby, 1685, “An Explanation of Some Terms of the Art of Painting”, n.p.; De Piles, 1708, p. 53–54.

History was thus first of all the universal part of the painting (Goeree, 1670, p. 119–120), its “most noble” (*plus noble*) and “most important part” (*plus importante partie*), “not to say everything” (*pour ne pas dire le tout*), which “supposes perfect knowledge of all parts of one’s Art” (*suppose une connoissance parfait de toutes les parties de son Art*, Leblond de Latour, 1669, p. 33–36). For this reason, the main challenge history painters faced was the tension between variety and unity.

Although history makes it possible to paint everything, representing figures in action was the first and foremost challenge for history painters. For Karel van Mander, “histories” (*Historien*) were, moreover, “figures” (*beelden*) (Van Mander, 1604, *Voor-reden*, fol. \*6r<sup>o</sup>); “History must (for such is its condition) reunite the patterns or figures that are appropriate to its composition” (Van Mander, 1604, *Grondt*, V, 4, fol. 15r<sup>o</sup>-15v<sup>o</sup>).

These figures had to be varied, as much in their complexity, their size and their physiognomy, as in their clothing, their attitudes and the attitudes of their heads (Vinci, 1651, p. 30; Van Mander, 1604, *Grondt*, V, 21, fol. 16v<sup>o</sup>; Sanderson, 1658, p. 73–74; Sandrart, 1675, p. 62; Lairese, 1712, t. I, p. 59). Why? Firstly because this variety allowed an artist to adapt the appearance of his figures to the nature of the people they represented (Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 41). Then, because only this variety could produce grace and pleasure in the eyes of the spectator (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 289). A history was comparable to a speech. If it untiringly repeats the same figures or the same kinds of figure, it will provoke boredom or disgust. If, on the other hand, the history knows how to vary the figures, by placing the tall one next to the small one, the ugly next to the handsome, the weak next to the strong, it will be “amusing” (*divertissante*, Vinci, 1651, p. 31).

Nevertheless, this essential variety was also a problem for the painter. The many talents it required of the history painter often obliged him to make use of the service of assistants to execute the parts that he mastered the least (Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 72–73). But it was also a problem for the work itself, as this practice could threaten the unity of the whole. Unity was an essential quality for all histories, as Leonardo da Vinci explained, stressing that “the painter must see

and draw the figures that he wants to place in the composition of a history” (*le peintre doit voir & desseigner les figures qu’il veut placer dans la composition d’une histoire*, Vinci, 1651, p. 9), insisting on the importance of the disposition, that is, the distribution of the figures on the surface of the painting (Van Mander, 1604, *Grondt*, V, 7, fol. 15v<sup>o</sup>) and in the perspective area of the scene (Vinci, 1651, p. 29).

A history was not merely a sum of its parts, as varied as possible; it also had to be “a whole” (*un tout ensemble*) that had to appear “well coordinated” (*bien d’accord*, Dolce/Vleughels, 1735, p. 165), that is, in which the parts were connected to each other on the basis of the relationships of convenience and proportion (Junius, 1641, p. 302; Testelin, s.d. [1693/1694], p. 19–20). Variety and abundance were thus qualities, but could also become failings when they were abusive. Van Mander reminded his readers that a history could be “copious” (*copiose*), but that this abundance could also be excessive, and that one could just as willingly enjoy simplicity (Van Mander, 1604, *Grondt*, V, 27, fol. 17v<sup>o</sup>).

It was thus necessary to allow spectators to quickly understand the subject by placing the most important part of the history in the most beautiful place in the work (De Grebber, 1649, p. 1)—generally in the foreground, putting the figures into relief, either by representing them in the centre, or by contrasting them through colouring (Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 186–189; Sandrart, 1679, p. 19, 80, Testelin, s.d. [1693/1694], p. 19–20; De Piles, 1708, p. 192). Furthermore, it was necessary that this variety be at the disposal of the expression of the *affetti* and passions. It was thus a question of recreating the feeling of the life and action, and of establishing an emotional relationship with the spectator (Browne, 1675, p. 55–56; Goeree, 1682, p. 322; Testelin, s.d. [1693/1694], p. 19–20).

The fact remained that a history was also, and perhaps above all, the representation of a narrative, generally taken from a fable—ancient history, mythology or the Scriptures. This attachment to a source, most commonly a textual source, posed other problems. In principle, effectively, a painter had to make sure that the representation he proposed was in conformity with its subject. He had to pay attention to what Philips Angel called “knowledge of the histories” (*kennisse der Hystorien*) (Angel, 1642, p. 44) or what Roland Fréart de Chambray called “Observation of Custom” (*l’Observation du Costûme*, Fréart de Chambray, 1662, p. 71–72; see also Sandrart, 1675, p. 79; Richardson, 1725, p. 17–18). This reading of the histories made it possible to remain

faithful to “the Truth” (*la Vérité*), which had to be “strong, exact and pure” (*fort exacte et pure*, Fréart de Chambray, 1662, p. 71–72), and what is “the Main Teaching of Painting” (*le Principal Magistère de la Peinture*, Fréart de Chambray, 1662, p. 71–72). This offers the chance to prove their erudition to the “judicious and well prepared” (*judicieux et bien avisez*) painters (Raphaël, Jules Romain, Nicolas Poussin), who were familiar with “all the main narratives (*geschiedenissen*) thanks to their meticulous research into antiquities and histories (*Historyen*)” (Goeree, 1670, p. 92–93). It also made it possible, when a subject was over-used, to find new ones that were sharper and more astonishing (La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747, p. 20–21).

But the truth of a history consists in matching what is represented with what happened, although it was not simple, as explained by Samuel van Hoogstraten, relating a discussion he had with Abraham Furnerius (1628–1654), in Rembrandt’s (1606–1669) studio to know what had happened (1678, p. 95–96).

The difficulty naturally lay in the sometimes intense research that this search for truth supposed. Before putting down on paper the first sketches of his history, the painter had to reflect on the manner in which he would visually transpose the narrative, even if it meant rereading it in order to identify the key elements and abandon those that were secondary or too difficult to represent (Van Mander, 1604, *Grondt*, V, 7, fol. 15v<sup>o</sup>; see also Junius, 1641, p. 301–302; Bosse, 1667, p. 20; Sandrart, 1679, p. 19). But the real difficulty also lay in the fact that “knowledge of histories” (*connaissance des histories*) was not enough for a painter who was only, as Roger de Piles stated, “a historian by accident” (*historien par accident*, De Piles, 1708, p. 67–69). Errors in the costume, observed Fréart de Chambray, were especially disagreeable “in the eyes of the Learned, who are always more shocked by errors of judgement and omission of Circumstances essential and necessary for the History that has been represented, than of anything that might be defective in the mechanical Part” (*aux yeux des Sçavants, qui sont toujours plus choquez des fautes de jugement, et de l’obmission des Circonstances essentielles et nécessaires à l’Histoire qu’on représente, que de ce qui pourroit estre defectueux dans la Partie mechanique*, 1662, p. 129). If a painter made serious mistakes regarding costume, he risked making himself look ridiculous in the eyes of academics, but also his own clients (Goeree, 1670, p. 123–124). But for De Piles, who was opposed to him, the argument could be inversed (De Piles, 1708, p. 67–69). The specificity of a painted history was that it had been

painted, not that it was history—without which one would be totally unable to understand why one did not simply read the narrative from which this same history was taken. The faithfulness of the history was not “the essence of the Painting” (*de l'essence de la Peinture*, De Piles, 1715, p. 29–30). It needed to be respected, but without excess:

If the Painter works at including in his subject a sign of erudition that arouses the attention of the Spectator without destroying the truth of the History, if he is capable of introducing any simple mark of Poetry into Historic facts that so allow it; in a word, if he treats subjects according to the moderate licence that is authorised for Painters and Poets, he will render his Inventions more elevated, and will attract greater distinction.

*(Si le Peintre a l'industrie de mêler dans son sujet quelque marque d'érudition qui réveille l'attention du Spectateur sans détruire la vérité de l'Histoire, s'il peut introduire quelque trait de Poësie dans les faits Historiques qui pourront le souffrir; en un mot, s'il traite ses sujets selon la licence modérée qui est permise aux Peintres & aux Poètes, il rendra ses Inventions élevées, & s'attirera une grande distinction.)*

The history must be true; but it must also be agreeable to look at. This is why, contrary to historical truth, history painters were encouraged to idealise most of their figures (Bosse, 1667, p. 1; Leblond de Latour, 1669, p. 33–36), and to the extent in which history supposes in principle “the imitation of beautiful nature” (*l'imitation de la belle nature*, Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1755, t. I, p. ix).

The temporal distance that separates the spectators from the people represented in history paintings further complicated the task of painters. Representing Alexander the Great with the greatest historical fidelity made it possible to respect the truth of the history. If, on the other hand, “a Painter imagined that Alexander was dressed as we are today, and he represented this Conquerer with a Hat and Wig like Actors have, he would without doubt produce something most ridiculous, and a very gross error” (*un Peintre s'imaginait qu'Alexandre fût vêtu comme nous le sommes aujourd'hui, & qu'il représentât ce Conquerant avec un Chapeau & une Perruque comme font les Comédiens, il ferait sans doute une chose très-ridicule, & une faute très-grossière*). But, as De Piles remarked again, “this error would be against History and not against Painting; supposing moreover that the things represented were thus in accordance with all the Rules of this Art” (*cette faute serait contre l'Histoire & non pas contre la Peinture; supposé d'ailleurs que les choses représentées le fussent selon toutes les Régles de cet Art*, De Piles, 1715, p. 32–33). The rules of



decency also evolved in the course of history. When Gerard de Lairesse explained that an “intelligent master” (*maître intelligent*) should know to not reveal “honourable ladies” (*femmes honorables*) too much, so that spectators not confuse them with “flighty” (*légères*) ladies, and defended the idea that this adaptation should be made in the name of “truth” (*vérité*, 1701, p. 112), it was not so much the truth in relation to the sources that he was referring to, but rather the modern idea that was made of them—without which the nudes in Michelangelo’s *Last Judgement* (1563–1541, Sixtine Chapel, Vatican) fully justified in the texts, would not have been condemned . . .

Beyond this affirmation of the “freedom” of painters (Angel, 1642, p. 46–47; Richardson, 1725, p. 51–52), the problem was also that of the distinction between truth and credibility, which certain theorists tended to confuse (Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 93), and not without reason: from the point of view of the artist, as well as that of the spectator, who generally had not taken part in the events that were represented, the image of these events could only be a representation of fiction. This, observed Gerard de Lairesse, was the “credibility which, through the organs of sight, acts so powerfully on our mind and our imagination” (*vraisemblance, qui, par les organes de la vue, agit si puissamment sur notre esprit & sur notre imagination*); this is why it “must mainly be observed in the disposition and execution of the subject” (*doit principalement être observée dans la disposition & l’exécution du sujet*, 1712, t. I, p. 52).

Furthermore, an image is not a text. This was very well understood by the Dutch painters (for example, Goeree, 1670, p. 92–93; Lairesse, 1701, p. 112), who often distinguished between the history in the narrative from which it was taken (*geschiedenis*) and history as a visual representation of this same narrative (*history*), a painted history cannot perfectly render a written history. Whilst the latter is based on a diachronic narrative, which takes place over time and develops successive episodes, the former can only represent an instant, or a set of instants, but which are only connected to each other spatially (Junius, 1641, p. 303). The art of history is an art of choice and translation. The painted history is clearly capable of rendering the succession of moments of the subject, either by repeating the same figures in several places, represented at different instants—although this process was often criticised for its archaism and its artificiality (Lairesse, 1712, t. I, p. 142–144) –, or by dividing the action into a series of paintings; but it “cannot reveal either the cause, or the link” (*peut faire voir ni*

*la cause, ni la liaison*) between the moments of the action (De Piles, 1708, p. 453). It was thus necessary, using Rembrandt's model, to focus the spectator's attention on the "instant action" (*oogen-bliklijke daedt* – literally: "what happens in a glance") (Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 178; see also Lairesse, 1712, t. I, p. 142).

Finally, a history is not the simple illustration of a narrative. It is also an interpretation of it, a rereading; and the fruits of its interpretation must be sufficiently comprehensible by most spectators. It also produces a "meaning" that a painter must not "offend" (Angel, 1642, p. 46–47). A painted history must lead to an evident enlightenment and clarification of the subject, so as to render the full meaning and force (Lairesse, 1712, t. I, p. 86), and this by the means of one's choice, including insertion of symbolic or allegorical elements, that it was nevertheless necessary to make understandable. Henry Testelin recognised that "the fable is incompatible with the truth" (*la fable est incompatible avec la vérité*); but he also admitted that a painting could not be absolutely true and that, in order "to express the mysteries" (*exprimer les mystères*) of a subject, that is, deploy the different meanings, the use of allegory was not forbidden (s.d. [1693/1694], p. 21). Michelangelo's *Last Judgement*, on the other hand, was condemnable in that "the very profound allegorical meanings" (*les sens allégoriques très profonds*) that it contained were not sufficiently explicit, and were too concealed within the image for them to interest its spectators. If a work is only intended for a limited number of learned people it misses its target. History, even a learned one, must interest its viewers (Dolce/Vleughels, 1735, p. 243–247). And if it lacks "clarity" (*netteté*), it is the sign of a lack of discernment in the painter, who spoiled the invention of his history by not making the necessary and adapted choices (De Piles, 1708, p. 69–70).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Aglionby, 1685; Angel, 1642; Bosse, 1667; Browne, 1669 [1675]; Da Vinci, 1651; De Grebber, 1649; De Lairesse, 1701, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1708, 1707 [1715]; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1752; Dolce/Vleughels, 1553 [1735]; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Félibien, 1676; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Goeree, 1670 a, 1668 [1670 b], 1668 [1670 c], 1682; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Le Blond De La Tour, 1669; Richardson, 1715

[1725]; Sanderson, 1658; Sandrart, 1675 et 1679; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Van Mander, 1604.

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## HOUDING

fr.: *harmonie, tenir ensemble, soutenir*  
 germ.: *Haltung, Zusammenhaltung (des Lichts), Gesamthaltung, Haupthaltung*  
 nl.: *Houding, wel houden*

**Agreement, harmony, *chiaroscuro*, goup, mass, repose, tone, whole-together**

*In painting Houding (in nl.) or Haltung (in germ.) referred to depth and distance, when an object in a painting stood out optically from those around it and this distinction was convincing for the eye. The elements in the foreground had to stand out with plastic clarity, whilst those further back receded optically thanks to a gradual decrease in the colour (desaturation)*

in conformity with what each configuration of the space required. Houding or Haltung was the title given to a global optical system that included the life of the figures and colours in a painting considered as a whole. This system was based on the dual nature of light, that is, the unity formed by the (material) distinction of objects and by the (immaterial) instantaneity of spatial extension. What was sought was thus obtaining a dual representation system, composed of superpositions and which harmoniously reconciled the static nature of the positions, with the dynamics of the intensity of different colours, dynamics that generated depth. The key to the success lay in the formation of a limited number of groups bringing together figures in a large surface, as well as in the differentiation of these groups in relation to the distribution over the aforementioned surface of masses of shade and light which captured the painting as a whole. The surroundings of the groups were expressed in the form of a contrast between the light and dark zones, perceived as either advancing out of, or receding into, the depth. The Gesamthaltung of a painting provided the spectator with a total impression of a coherent structure of light, which could be differentiated at the same time in relation to the different objects. The technique known as that of Titian's bunch of grapes was an example of composition making it possible to illustrate this point. The position (static), of which the concept of Haltung ou Houding underlined the importance, was a place of temporary rest. This position did not immobilise the continuity of space; on the contrary, it was the expression of the moderation of light, which, thanks to the degradation, created "with gentleness" fluid transitions and which, in doing so, subordinated the individual values of the colours in a global pictorial agreement. Junius was without doubt at the origin of this discourse: in *De schilderkonst der oude* (1641, p. 308), he claimed there was an uninterrupted continuity (onverbroken) in the name of houdinghe; all the parts had to be firmly bound and linked (verbonden) with each other. They thus seemed to delicately blend into each other, as if they were holding hands: they hold and are held (houden d'andere op, en worden wederom van d'andere opgehouden). The long route traced by Junius' definition ran from Angel, Sandrart and Hoogstraeten to Lairesse, who, in a chapter titled "Van de houding en smeltinge der koleuren in de Zolderstukken" (1707, [1740, p. 156]) explicitly cited the third volume of the "grooten Junius" as a source. Sandrart's *Academie* (1675 I, p. 84–85, 301, 326 et II, p. 19) was considered to be the oldest printed source to use the German term of Haltung to speak of Houding. Alongside the Dutch sources, translations of French texts (*De Piles* 1708/1760, *Watelet* 1763, *Pernety* 1757/1764, *Testelin* 1676–1773) determined the semantics of the German equivalent in

the 18th century. It is important to underline that French literature devoted to art did not provide the accepted French term: the numerous uses of *houding* in the Dutch translation of *Le Comte's Cabinet des singularitez* (1699–1700)—*Het konst-cabinet der bouw-, schilder- beeldhouwen raveerkunde* (1744, II, p. 317, 381, 404: “houding van Licht en bruin”, “houding van lighten en schaduwen”, “houding der lighten”)—corresponded in the original (1699–1700, [1702 II, p. 35, 101, 124]) to: “contrary of light and shade”, “conduct of daylight and shadow”, “understanding of light”. The title of one chapter in *Lairesse's Schilderboek* (1702, p. 227: *Van de Harmonie of Houdinge der Koleuren*) became “Of the Agreement or Harmony of colours” (*De l'Accord ou de l'Harmonie des couleurs*) in *Jansen's translation* (*Le Grand livre des Peintures*, 1787, I, p. 356). Huber translated by “the tone of degradation” (*le ton de la degradation, Réflexions sur la peinture*, 1775, I, p. 283) the use of *Haltung* in *Hagedorn's Betrachtungen über die Mahlerey* (1762, I, p. 299). The English equivalent is keeping: *John Dryden's translation* of *De Arte Graphica* (1668, p. 337, translated in 1695) by *Charles-Alphonse Dufresnoy* contained an appendix: the anonymous *Short Account of the most Eminent Painters* (“by another Hand”), that comes from *Richard Graham*. His brief description of the life of the Flemish painter, *Adriaen Brouwer* (1605–1638) praised the “good Keeping in the whole together” of the painter. It is impossible to not notice the confluence of keeping and the French concept of *tout-ensemble* (all together), which expressed a concept of effect of unity in painting.

### Proportional *chiaroscuro*: Increasing and Decreasing the Forces of Space

In Goeree's theory of *Houding*, figuration, position and proportion formed a unity: the dynamics of space, characterised by the movements of opposing tendencies—towards the front or the back—could be mastered thanks to the balanced proportions of *chiaroscuro*, that is, thanks to a successive decrease in its contrasts. When the distance increased, the figures became closer together and blended into one another so to speak. Decreasing the contrast of the *chiaroscuro* proportionally to the depth weakened the colours. Increasing the distance made them appear more and more pale and closed. This decrease nevertheless revealed all “the spatial extent and position specific to all the things placed in the foreground” (*ruymste en eyge standt-plaets van alle voorwerpen*, 1670, p. 109). According to Goeree, the priority

lay with the position, which supported the figure, by outlining it with precision in the surrounding area. The question of the position of a figure in relation to its surroundings, as well as taking into consideration its position in the whole, decided on the general *welstandt* or *Wohlstand* of a work. The place or position offered the support without which the objects in the painting gave the impression of “wavering” (*Tommelingshs*) in a way. Thanks to the artistic principles of *Houding* on the other hand, the place that had to be “open and free” (*open en ledigh*) between the figures could be apprehended so naturally that “our feet [seem to have] an access” (*met de Voeten toegankelijk*) to the painting. Like Goeree, Hoogstraeten and Lairesse also described all the colours topicalised by the concept of *Houding* in the sense of a polarity between force, power and violence on the one hand, and weakness, moroseness and lassitude on the other. In the chapter that Lairesse devoted to *Houding*, the questions of order regarding subordination and domination featured in the foreground. The order of the colours was based on a dispute concerning rank, in a combat for respecting the order of the ranks. It all thus took place according to Frisch’s translation “as in a camp, where, in the general’s absence, the lieutenant-general commands, and in a company, the lieutenant for the captain, and the ensign for him, even the sergeant is not without his power” (1740, p. 230). The dominant position must not be weakened: it had to retain the upper hand. It was a question of weakening every object, “to lessen its force, or to kill it” (*ibid.*)—any object that visually became too close.

### Against the Laws of the Hierarchy of Genres

With reference to Dutch painting, Oudry explained the effect of light at his academic conference in 1749 (in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. V, vol. 1, p. 319): light made it possible to bring objects forward, or have them recede. He did not recommend using scaled fields. Instead, he recommended “a much more extensive graduation” to provide enough room for a crowd of figures (in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. V, vol. 1, p. 340). The still life—“a simple bouquet of flowers” (in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. V, vol. 1, p. 334)—whose position in the hierarchy of genres was considered to be low, was enough for him to demonstrate his principles of opposition and of “keeping” (in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. V, vol. 1, p. 336). This example of composition came from Hoogstraten (1678, p. 300, 303), who qualified with *Tuilkonst/Tuiling*

(Eng. “*the art of bouquets*”) the arrangement of light and shade, the fact of advancing, receding, rounding out and shortening in the sense of *Houding/wel houden*. *Houding* was a transition concept. It combined in a new way the classification of the *parts* in painting: *chiaroscuro* and colour acquired a priority rank. He initiated the pluralisation process for genres and pictorial patterns, and shook up the hierarchies based on an appreciation according to a vertical scale structured from top to bottom.

In an essay from 1777 which captured the atmosphere of the period by extending from the late *Aufklärung* to *Sturm und Drang*, Merck described how to appreciate the effect of mysterious, and almost magical depth that the *Haltung* gave to the meticulous representations of private space and everyday scenes, to simple objects and unexceptional landscapes; during prolonged contemplation, this effect could produce a sensation of happiness:

The feeling for the *Haltung* is a unique thing, much more spiritual than the knowledge of forms, and only a well-trained eye can be aware of the nature of shade and light everywhere. It is a fortunate man that has an eye of this kind . . . It perceives something new as soon as his body changes position, when the sun rises and sets, as well as at each hour of the day, when the clouds thicken or dissipate, and it perceives everything in a head of cabbage, a complete picture of every sand dune and in a pine forest, however flat it is.

(*Das Gefühl für Haltung ist ein ohngleich geistigeres Ding als die Kenntniß der Formen, und es gehört ein langgeübtes Auge dazu, die Wirthschaft (économie) der Natur mit Schatten und Licht überall inne zu werden. Wer dies Auge hat, ist ein glücklicher Mensch. [ . . . ] Wie sein eigener Körper seine Lage verändert, wie die Sonne steigt und sinkt, nach allen ihren Tagzeiten, wie jede Wolke dichter oder dünner wird, sieht er etwas Neues; in jedem Kohlhaupt ein Ganzes, auf jedem Sandhügel, in dem flachsten Tannenwald ein vollständiges Gemählde.*)

Hans-Joachim DETHLEFS  
[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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De Lairese, 1707 [1712], [1728–30, 1740]; De Piles, 1708 [1760]; Goeree, 1670 a; Hagedorn, 1762 [1775]; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Le Comte, 1699–1700 [1744]; Merck, 1777; Pernety, 1757 [1764]; Sandrart, 1675 et 1679; Testelin, 1676; Watelet, 1763.

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I know not what  $\implies$  Beauty, Grace, Sublime

## IDEA

fr.: *idée*  
germ.: *Idee*  
nl.: *idee*  
it.: *idea*  
lat.: *idea*

**Conception, intent, first thought, invention, imagination, mind, memory, genius, model, form, drawing**

*The term idea, derived from the Greek  $\text{id\acute{\epsilon}\alpha}$ , had such success in the field of art theory in the early modern age that it is extremely difficult to summarise all the theoretical issues involved, and even more so the changes it underwent, given that its roots and all their ramifications extended well beyond the field of thought of art. Furthermore, it is impossible to imagine the extent and importance of it, without mentioning as the starting point the seminal work by Erwin Panofsky (1924), which played a significant role in revealing it as a key concept in classical aesthetics. The importance of this publication lies essentially in the fact that it showed how this term opened up artistic literature to properly speculative reflection, distancing it from the field of practice, to focus instead on what preceded the execution, that is, the creation*

*of the mental image and the conception of beauty. In the wake of this inaugural study, many other works highlighted the fundamental polysemy of the term which made it swing constantly between a conception of Platonic inspiration on the one hand, which saw in the idea an archetype that transcended reality, and a conception of Aristotelian inspiration on the other, which perceived it as immanent to reality and better still, to the human mind, the real site of conception of the idea and the one that proceeds from both perception and intellectual activity. The term thus made it possible to reflect on, or even overcome, the tension between imitation and imagination, the latter being seen as both the receptive and creative faculty.*

### The Italian Origins

The extreme malleability in the term, bearing witness to the syncretism between ancient, mediaeval and Renaissance philosophical traditions, was expressed at the end of the 17th century in the definition in the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie*: "The concept and the image that the mind forms of something. It is also taken when talking of God, for the eternal forms, examples and models of all the things created that are in his understanding" (*Le Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, 1694, p. 582). A century and a half earlier, Benedetto Varchi, in one of his *Lezione* (1549), established, on the subject of one of Michelangelo's sonnets, an equivalence between the *idea* and the *concetto*: "As used by the poet [Michelangelo], *concetto* corresponds to what the Greeks referred to as *idea*, in Latin example (*exemplar*), and for us, model (*modello*), that is, form (*forma*) or the image (*immagine*), designated by some as intention (*intenzione*), that we have in our imagination (*fantasia*), of all that we think that we want or do or say" (1549, p. 24). It can be seen here a semantic field combining Platonic inspirations with those from the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition. *Concetto*, *exemplar*, *modello*, and *forma* referred, like the term *idea*, to cognitive processes, and more particularly to the genesis of knowledge and the abstraction process. This is why the word *idea* appears in the titles of a great many works on the fields of knowledge in which it was a question of presenting a *compendium*.

It thus appears in the title of a book by Giulio Camillo Delminio, the *Idea del Theatro* (1550). Here, it is to understand in the sense of the ideal plan, which, moreover, was that of an architecture of knowledge and memory, through which one observes an overlap between the Platonic sense and the Vitruvian sense. And this innate idea was presented

as being of divine origin: “Ideas are the forms and examples of the essential things in the eternal spirit, where they exist even before the things are made and from whence all things created draw their being” (p. 24–25). It is the same conception of a primary form that appeared in the field of art theory as early as Francisco de Holanda’s *Da Pintura Antigua* (1548, see book I, chap. XV). It then gained in popularity in the major Italian treatises in the second half of the 16th century, where it was also possible to observe an attempt at compromise: the artistic *idea* was obtained through observation of the world by means of a process of abstraction. Paolo Pino had already argued that painting was a liberal art because the sensorial data were first “reduced” to the state of idea (“the imagined thing comes from the other intrinsic senses reduced to the aspect of the idea”, *Dialogo*, 1547, p. 10). In 1568, Vasari defined the *disegno* as a process that “extracts from many things a universal judgement, similar to a form or an idea of all the works of nature” (*Vite*, p. 43). In the *Trattato dell’arte della pittura, scoltura, et architettura* (1585), as in the *Idea del Tempio della Pittura* (1590) by Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, the Platonic idea (“our natural idea which, from the heavens, is infused in us”, *Trattato*, p. 452) also blended with a less metaphysical and more natural meaning. In his *Veri precetti della pittura* (1587), Giovanni Battista Armenini in turn reaffirmed clearly that

the painter must have in his mind a very beautiful idea of the things that he wants to produce, so that he does not make anything that does not have dignity or thought; but what is the idea? In brief, painters say amongst themselves that it must only be the apparent form of created things, conceived according to the understanding of the painter.

(1587, p. 137)

Taking care to address artists and art lovers rather than philosophers and theologians, Federico Zuccari, in his *Idea de’ Pittori, Scultori, ed Architetti* (1607), went a step further by assimilating the term *idea* with that of *interior drawing*, which once again made him swing towards innatism (“the soul of the Drawing”, the “divine image printed on our Soul”, is “a primary and innate concept in the human intellect, the soul of the intellectual soul”, II, 1, 1767, p. 70) and acquisitionism, thus tempering the neoplatonic approach by means of an Artistotelian-Thomistic orthodoxy, appropriate in the context of the Counter-Reformation.

It was on this theoretical basis that the 17th century arrived, with the term *idea* scattering in all languages with a certain semantic stability,

whilst nevertheless blending with other notions: concept, thought, model, form, drawing/design . . . In their search for a happy medium between an unbridled imagination and exacerbated naturalism, art theorists such as Scamozzi, Agucchi or Bellori then focused on the *Idea dell bello*. This idea, which became the “goddess of painting” (1672, p. 10) in the writings of Pietro Bellori, drew “its origin from nature”, even if “it went beyond its origin and became itself the origin of art” (1672, p. 4). It came from both perception and intelligence:

This is why the noble painters and sculptors, imitating the First Worker, thus also formed in their mind a model of higher beauty, and without taking their eyes off it amended nature by correcting the colours and lines. [ . . . ] The idea of the painter and the sculptor is this model that is perfect and excellent in the mind, which the things that are before our eyes resemble, because they imitate the imaged form.

(1672, p. 4)

Inspired by Franciscus Junius, in whom the idea of beauty once again found its basis in a certain transcendence of inspiration (“There is then in the form and shape of things a certain perfection and excellencie, unto whose conceived figure such things by imitation are referred as cannot be seen. Plato, a most grave Author and teacher, not of knowing only, but also of speaking, doth call these figures Ideas” *The Painting of the Ancients*, I, 2), thus despite everything, Bellori broke creation down to the immanence of the world created.

### The *Idea* to the North of the Alps

For northern theory, we can observe a similar insistence on the natural origin of ideas, in the sense that they came from a vision of nature. Although for Karel van Mander (1604, fol. 46v), certain painters “are capable of rapidly tracing on their canvases that which was already completely painted in their idea”, for Samuel Van Hoogstraten “the art of painting is a science that must make it possible to represent all ideas or all concepts that the whole of visible nature can give us” (1678, p. 24). In return, both the spectator and the art lover must, in order to appreciate a work to its just value, “penetrate the idea of the painter”. The idea eventually came to designate all that the imagination and intelligence conceived in interaction with nature, an imagination that must apply itself “to forming the most accomplished Ideas that they can conceive” (François de la Mothe le Vayer, 1648, p. 104) and an intelligence that was at the origin of the drawing. The memory was

the “vase” into which genius, according to Roger de Piles, chose the ideas with the help of judgment (*L'idée du peintre parfait*, 1715, [1736, p. 14]). The idea, assimilated with the *disegno esterno*, could also refer to the sketch itself, that is to “these first ideas that the painter threw on to the paper for the execution of the work that he is proposing” (Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1755, I, p. XVII), from where we can establish this intimate link between design and drawing.

If the idea of beauty referred to its perfection, that which was inherent to nature, the theory of the sublime and of genius, ended up reinstating a certain innatism. Thus, for Jonathan Richardson, “he that would rise to the Sublime must form an Idea of Something beyond all we have yet seen; or which Art, or Nature has yet produc'd” (1725, p. 259). For Roger de Piles, if “Genius is a part that cannot be acquired either by study or by work”, this genius had to have an idea of visible nature, “not only as can be seen by chance in particular subjects, but as it must be in itself, according to its perfection, and as it would be effectively, if it had not been deformed by accidents” (*L'idée du peintre parfait*, 1715, [1736, p. 3]). Here, then, the idea preserved the sense of model or archetype. It was this real intellectual target, not to say vision, that had to serve as the guide for creation, as for all knowledge:

No one wins the prize in a race if he cannot see the finishing point; and one cannot acquire perfect knowledge of any art, nor any science, without having a real idea about it. This idea is our aim, and it is the idea that directs he who runs, and which allows him to arrive safely at the end of his career, I mean to say, in possession of the science that he sought. (De Piles, 1708, p. 1)

At the end of this history, it is interesting to remark the way in which the term *idea*, imported from the field of philosophy to that of artistic creation, reappeared in philosophical works by retaining this artistic dimension. Thus in his *Abrégé curieux et familier de toute la philosophie*, Léonard de Marandé started a chapter devoted to the idea in metaphysics by underlining from the outset that:

the Idea, generally speaking, is the model, the painting, the original and the example on which a worker works to make a copy of it and produce what he had projected. From where it comes from that the painter who works on the drawing that he has formed in his fantasy, is said to work and produce a painting on the idea that he had of it in his mind and which serves him as the original.

(De Marandé, 1642, p. 552)

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Armenini, 1587; Bellori, 1672; De Holanda, 1548 [1921]; Delminio, 1550; De Marande, 1642; De Piles, 1707 [1715]; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1752; Dictionnaire, 1694; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648; Lomazzo, 1584, 1590; Pino, 1548; Richardson, 1715 [1725]; Van Mander, 1604; Varchi, 1549; Vasari, 1550/1568; Zuccari, 1607 [1768].

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Illusion  $\implies$  Artifice, Pleasure

## IMAGINATION

fr.: *imagination*  
 germ.: *Imagination, Einbildung, Einbildungskraft*  
 nl.: *imagination, inbeeldingskracht, fantasie*  
 it.: *fantasia*  
 lat.: *fantasia*

**Imaginative faculty, fancy, image, idea, fantasy, invention, memory, imitation, model, practice**

*Imagination is the first quality that is required of a painter or a poet. Baillet de Saint-Julien (1750, p. 14) or Du Bos referred to the creation of allegories in the paintings of Rubens' Medicis Gallery (1719 [1740], p. 185–186), but this faculty of the artist, painter or poet was also mentioned in the definition of imitation, to the point that Sanderson defined its power in relation to that of the imagination (fancy) (1658, p. 32–33). The choice of subject, circumstances and accidents were also subordinated to its force (De Piles, 1708, p. 429–430). Certainly, one can recognise in it the ability to create something new (Junius, I, IV, 6), to invent new stories from visible things or things written in books (Bosse, 1649, p. 8–9), or to replace the lack of truth in a heroic landscape, for example (De Piles, 1708, p. 203–204). But the licences of the imagination, inspired by poetry, were only accepted on the condition that they satisfy the rules of art, that is, decency and truth (De Piles, 1668, Remarque 1, p. 59–61, 1715, p. 32–33). Despite the analogy between painting and poetry, which are both arts of imitation based on the imagination, there was effectively an essential difference between them, as defined by Junius: poets tried to create astonishment through the fabulous, while painters tried to find the force of truth and clarity (of expression) which were, for them, the essential aim of the imagination (I, IV, 6). It is to Junius that we owe a theoretical approach to diverse sorts of phantasia. This distinction marked in a very obvious manner the evolution in the concept in the 17th century. Basing his work on the ancient literary tradition, the Dutch theorist defined two different kinds of imagination. The first was considered*



to be a faculty that received ideas. The process for forming images was described with precision: the senses perceived the forms and colours, then, from what was observed, the intelligence or intellect, called the mirror of the senses, recomposed the object that thus triggered the movement of the imagination (1641, I, II, § 1). The second was a creative faculty. It was not constructed only in reference to the concept of platonic Idea. It also designed the forms that the receptive imagination represented, and provided artists with the perfectly completed models of their future work (1641, I, II, § 2). These two conceptions were not contradictory, they were found with different inflections in all the texts on art in the 17th and 18th centuries. They thus played a part in redefining the role of the spirit (or understanding) and that of memory. For Félibien, it was necessary to fill one's mind with images, and imprint them on one's memory. They fortified the imagination to produce new images (4<sup>e</sup> Entretien, 1672, p. 402–403). Imprinting images in one's memory (Sanderson, 1658, p. 32–33) was an essential task. Goeree compared the imagination to registers that were filled up through the practice of observation (1670a, p. 41–42). The artist could then find there the images of objects from nature, either immobile or in movement. What was perceived by the senses, then received in the imagination was then imprinted in the spirit, formed in understanding. This then developed the artist's faculty of judgement, and allowed him to make the best choices (Junius, 1641, I, II, § 4). However, the role and predominance of the imagination in relation to reason was the subject of debate, particularly in France. Whilst recognising the importance of the imaginative faculty, Félibien for example opposed the beauty of the imagination of Pierre Cortone (1596–1669) and the force of the reasoning in Poussin (1688, 9<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 12).

### From Mental Image to Painting

The return to Vasari's tradition of assimilating the mental image with the Idea was common in France and northern Europe in the 17th century. Basing himself on the theorists of the Italian Renaissance, Pader turns the imagination into a mental image, prior to the creation process on paper (drawing) (1649, n.p.). Similarly, La Mothe Le Vayer invited the painter to form the most accomplished Ideas that could be conceived (1648, *Lettre IX*, p. 103–104). Thanks to the imagination, the artist could form a sketch in his reason, “the nourishing mother of all invention” (Junius, 1641, III, I, 11). The conception which made this faculty a synonym of *conchetto*, and affirmed its role in invention and drawing, was equally emphasised by Fréart de Chambray (1662, p. 11).

The idea of the imagination as the seat of the ideal image remained common in the 18th century. Batteux thus attributed this character to a painting conceived according to the rules of Beauty in the imagination of the painter (1746, p. 248–249).

The theorists also touched on the question of the relationship between the visible form, considered to be the expression of an immanent form, created by the artist in his imagination (*fantasia*), and the invisible. Thanks to the power of the imagination, art reproduces the invisible by figuring the visible, whether these objects have never been seen or glimpsed quickly (Junius, 1641, I, II, §3). This did not give rise to long, abstract developments in the theoretical writings, but to considerations on the practice of painting. The work of the artist was compared to that of nature that creates. The imagination was awakened by the fire of the spirit (Fréart, 1662, p. 11), and Goeree attributed to this faculty the possibility of painting the beauty of man if it is printed in it with force. The life of the painting also depended on it. This could then be painted, as if the painter had this Beauty before his eyes, with the same qualities of force and life (1682, p. 34–35).

Sandart repeated almost word for word Vasari's definition and presented *Einbildung* or *Imagination* (*imaginatio sive conceptus* in the Latin edition in 1683) as formed from the Idea or model of all things (1675, p. 60). He also defined the role of the drawing from this faculty of the mind (1679, p. 12). But he simultaneously proposed another approach to the imagination, similar to the second meaning that Junius gave to the term. The intellectual conception of the drawing, fruit of the *Idea*, as a representation of the imagination and as the basis for artistic practice was put into perspective by the essential role that he gave to observation. This served as the intermediary between the senses that perceived, and thought. The imagination was thus also associated with memory, and served to construct an *index imaginum* which contributed to creation. He thus returned to the two meanings given by Junius. But because he did not focus on providing any theoretical teaching, he developed the practice of observation. The other northern theorists generally followed the same line of thought.

When Van Mander spoke of painting from his imagination (1604, fol. 15v), he was not referring to an *Idea*, but to the expression of various accessories of a composition featured in this faculty of the mind before making a sketch of it. The need to order the various parts in the imagination before approaching the execution was also common in the texts. It was mentioned by Félibien (1666, 1<sup>er</sup> *Entretien*, p. 45–46), but

he no longer emphasised the need for judgement, nor that the mind order the thoughts in his imagination (1688, 9<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 114). For Dezallier d'Argenville, the operation of the composition (invention and disposition) was the *poetics* (*poétique*) of the painting which depended on the imagination and genius (*Avertissement*, 1745–1755, p. III-IV). This quality was linked to the drawing, considered to be the product of the intellect and the imagination by Testelin (s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 36), and by De Piles, who returned to the common assertion of the parallel between the *Idea* and the sketch in the imagination (1715, p. 70). But De Piles developed at the same time another conception of the imagination. By defining the manner of an artist as the *salt of the drawing* (*sel du dessin*), and by affirming that it was by this characteristic that it moved the imagination of the spectator (1715, p. 71), De Piles introduced a considerable distance into the assimilation of the sketch and the *Idea* with the imagination. Using the example of Rubens (1577–1640), he also broadened the field of application of this faculty to colour and the pleasure it gave, thus entirely erasing the confusion maintained by the theorists of the Renaissance between the imagination and the *Idea* (1677, p. 227).

### Models and Imagination

The imagination is nourished with details that must then be assembled (Pader, 1649, n.p.), filled with what one sees, depending on one's country and one's temperament (Audran, 1683, n.p.), and it was thus conceived in close relation with imitation, which it supported with efficacy. It was effectively thanks to the imagination, through what is imprinted in it, that the artist can represent an object that is no longer before his eyes (Junius, 1641, I, p. 14–15). The power of the imagination to maintain all objects present and alive goes beyond the possibilities of memory. Goeree, for example, considered that life was so rich that it was impossible for a painter to remember everything, or even to capture everything at the same time (Goeree, 1670a, p. 78–80). The imagination thus replaced this defect.

If we set aside the “whims” that came entirely from the fantasy of the painter (La Mothe, 1648, p. 114–116), or what Baillet de Saint-Julien called a *ghost* (*fantôme*) which formed in the imagination when nature could not provide a model (Baillet de Saint-Julien, 1750, p. 9–10), the imagination was conceived as being strongly linked to the model as seen by the eye. It made it possible to correct the attitude and proportion of the figures (Bosse, 1649, p. 98–99), and to remain faithful to the

original, without allowing oneself to be seduced by the manners of others if one wanted to paint from nature or in accordance with the ancient style (Bosse, 1649, p. 101). This faculty was also necessary if one wanted to paint portraits (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 46, Goeree, 1682, p. 204–205), or fruit (Goere, 1670c, p. 51–52), and more generally to imitate nature. Similarly, it was the imagination that painters needed to make use of in order to represent beauty, because beauty was rarely present in a single person (Goere, 1682, p. 35–36).

### The Practice of the Imagination

The power of a strong imagination was an essential quality for a painter (Goeree, 1670a, p. 42–43), at the same level as a universal spirit, a well-discerning eye and a free hand (Bosse, 1649, p. 87). Attributed to it were vivacity and courage (Sandrart, 1675, p. 72), including for imitating nature. Whereas imitation was limited by the things that had been seen, the imagination had no such limits (Junius, 1641, I, II, 2), and made it possible to go beyond the mere resemblance with visible things. Because it presides over the representation of things that are absent, as well as those that are invisible, it can distance the painter from imitating the manner of his predecessors, and thus allow him to attain perfection (Junius, I, II, 3). Junius, for example, cited the practice of symmetry which had to be sought through the imagination (Junius, 1641, III, II, 6). The model of nature was not rejected; on the contrary, it could even be attained in a more truthful way because a vivid imagination was necessary for imitating nature. Aglionby gave a clear definition of this apparent contradiction: after having drawn much from nature and from the Ancients, a vivid imagination was necessary in order to be a good painter and to dispose the objects well. It was this imagination that effectively defined the precise relationship of things with each other, and which meant that the work resembled nature (Aglionby, 1685, p. 8–9).

The need to reinforce one's imagination was the natural continuation of this conception. This idea was omnipresent in the theoretical writings that sought above all to provide a basis and an explanation for practice. Cultivating this quality was essential. On the one hand, it was a question of not forcing or restricting one's spirit, but rather of waiting for the fire to be ignited and to then allow oneself to be carried away by one's imaginations (Félibien, 1672, *4<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 407). On the other, it was a question of real practice for reinforcing and using one's powers, as well as those of memory. Da Vinci thus proposed

retracing the figures inscribed in his imagination (1651, chap. XVII, p. 5). Dupuy du Grez, Sandrart, Félibien and other theorists brought to mind the use of tablets mentioned by da Vinci to note down and imprint in one's imagination what one considered to be worthy of being observed. This practice, based on observation, was different from the use of books of models, which were destined to be copied. It played a part in helping the imagination, on the one hand because the models were taken from nature and, on the other, because these models expressed freedom and were abundant (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 287). The great many possibilities made it possible to choose that which, thanks to its air or attitude, would be the most conform to what one wanted to draw (Vinci, 1651, chap. CXC, p. 62–63; chap. CCXVIII, p. 71). Often evoked for defining the portrait of the learned painter, reading was also considered to be a useful and necessary practice for filling the imagination. Through reading, the painter, resembling in this the poet, could invent the histories he wanted to paint in a new manner (De Piles, 1715, p. 41–42). It was effectively not the erudition that interested theorists such as Sandrart, but rather the process of which he detailed the different moments: reading the text in the works of several authors so as to choose the best version of the history, imprint what he had read into his imagination, and conceive the invention in his reason (1675, p. 79a). The final stage was thus to render visible all these imaginations on his canvas, thanks to his hand.

The frequent convergence, rather than the opposition, between the two conceptions of the imagination also led to a new approach. The ability to conceive, the ability to see . . . the imagination also played a part in the ability to judge. This power could and needed to be developed by both painters and art lovers, as it made it possible for everyone to recognise the history, to appreciate and to judge (Goere, 1670a, p. 42–43). Thanks to the image formed in his imagination, the painter was able to correct himself (Bosse, 1667, p. 20). It was the imagination that kept within it the manners of the painters, and thus allowed art lovers to recognise the originals. This capacity was full of life and not bound by any rules (Salmon, 1672, p. 6–7). It also had the power to act on the spectator and brought judgement to life (Junius, 1641, I, IV). But it was thus no longer the *Idea*, but the living impression of the work and the *vraisemblance* that acted on the imagination of the spectator (Lairesse, 1712, p. 52).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Aglionby, 1685; Audran, 1683; Baillet De Saint-Julien, 1750; Batteux, 1746; Bosse, 1649, 1667; Da Vinci, 1651; De Piles, 1668; De Piles, 1677; De Piles, 1708; De Piles, 1715; De Lairese, 1707 [1712]; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1752; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Félibien, 1666–1688; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Goeree 1670 a, 1670 c; Goeree, 1682; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648; Pader, 1649; Salmon, 1672; Sanderson, 1658; Sandrart, 1675; Sandrart, 1679; Sandrart, 1683; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Van Mander, 1604.

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## IMITATION

fr.: *imitation*  
 germ.: *Nachahmung, Kopie*  
 nl.: *imitatie*  
 it.: *imitazione*  
 lat.: *imitatio*

**Copy, model, nature, naturalness, after nature, after the life, resemblance, manner, observation, choice, imagination, genius, truth, vraisemblance**

*Basing itself on the dual orientation given by Plato and Aristotle, between Idea and Nature, the debate on the role of imitation in artistic creation played an essential role in art theory. Was the aim of art to create perfect forms, or did the perfection lie in a rendering of the objects and beings that was so lively as to be able to deceive the eye? This question had been present*

*in all the theoretical writings since the Renaissance, all of which were based on the idea that art has to imitate nature, and that painting had to draw all its observations from nature. Was it necessary to imitate the real world or exterior model, or the interior model or ideal that existed only in the imagination? The answers given by the theorists of the Renaissance were very varied. Imitation could be selective, and the choice had to be for the most beautiful parts, as proposed by Alberti (Alberti, III, 51). On the contrary, Leonardo da Vinci undertook to imitate nature without trying to improve it, for that would have made it mannered, that is, contrary to itself. A rupture occurred in the 16th century with theorists such as Vasari. He considered that art could correct nature, and encouraged artists to learn from others, ancient or modern, who had acquired in their works this grace through which art surpassed nature. Lomazzo, Armenini and Zuccaro laid down the foundations of classic aesthetics by establishing a new conception of beauty, the Bellissima Idea that the artist carried within himself (the disegno interno for Zuccaro). Both of these manners of thinking about imitation (between faithfulness to nature and an idealised conception) traversed the conception of imitation in France, England, the Netherlands and Germany in the 17th and 18th centuries. Imitating reality or imitating the Idea were not the only preoccupations. All the same, it was not so much a reflection on the image as on the concept of truth. The focus was thus on the object of imitation (which could be very varied, and extended to all that could be found in nature), the truth, the vraisemblable, and the practice that governed representation so that it may be in conformity with the rules of art, with more or less inflections depending on the country. The growing place for the aesthetics of sentiment, and a new sentiment for nature in the 18th century led to an abandonment of imitation by the rules that governed them, leaving a more important role to the analysis of sensations. Other questions interested the theorists: the relationship between observation and the perception of the thing, or the role of the intellect and the imagination in the elaboration of the harmony and unity of a painting. Since the Renaissance, these questions focused on the nature of the creative act: was it limited to he who imitated or was it the fruit of the mind or imagination?*

### From the Definition of Imitation to that of Painting

In his *De Pictura Veterum*, based on an interpretation of Quintilian and Cicero, Franciscus Junius, starting with the comparison between the creative act of the artist and that of God the Creator, based art on imitation according to a relationship with nature and beauty (I, 1). He

thus simultaneously defined painting as a representation of what was seen and of what was hidden, and proposed two types of imitation: the first was the expression of the visible world from life, the second was that of a mental image obtained from observation of nature, created by the imagination from the trace of sensation (sight) (Junius, I, 2). Both these types of imitation clearly revealed the two orientations that could be identified in the definitions of painting. Between the assertion made by Pader, the translator of Lomazzo, underlining that it was not enough to simply imitate, but that it was necessary to adjust (*Peinture parlante*, 1657, p. 5), and da Vinci (whose *Trattato* was published in 1651), who granted perfection to a painting that best imitated and was in conformity with what was natural (1651, CCLXXVI, p. 90–91), and reminded people that one must not resort to nature, including in its extravagance (1651, XXIV, p. 6), Junius' proposition opened the way for classical aesthetics. By extolling the virtues of idealising imitation, he played a part in developing the idea that it was necessary to perfect nature in order to attain perfection in painting. Like Bellori, English theorists such as Smith defended the idea that the power of painting lay in imitation and correction of nature (1692, p. 64). Producing a good painting meant imitating nature in its most beautiful aspects (Aglionby, 1685, p. 104–106), or representing it as it was in the painter's mind, in what it had that was rare, in such a way that the grace and grandeur stood out (Richardson, 1719, p. 27–30). The anecdote of Zeuxis and the daughters of Crotona was the paradigm of this type of imitation, which applied to history painting for the rendering of the figure, but also to landscapes for the representations of nature. The question of models (ancient, modern) was thus considered to be essential.

In France, the debate also had great acuity, but it took different directions. It focused on other aspects, in particular the search for a definition that took into account characters in order to attain imitation. If painting was composed of lines and colours, it was nevertheless the latter that were the most important for producing the effect of truth (Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 35–36; De Piles, 1708, p. 311–312). Similarly, they were the guarantee of the greatest faithfulness (De Piles, 1708, p. 3). Batteux associated exactitude with freedom, the first regulated it, the second brought it to life (1746, p. 88). The rules required for imitation were also associated with reflection on the stakes of imitation: delectation for Félibien (1685, 8<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 309–310), seducing the eyes for De Piles (1708, p. 3). Baillet de Saint Julien intensified this approach by affirming that in painting, imitation pleased more



than the imitated object because the painter could never succeed in being as exact as nature (1750, p. 23–24). Through its power to have the unpleasant side of nature accepted, the sight of a snake for example, the agreeableness that imitation produced became the heart of the discourse (Batteux, 1746, p. 93–94). It was no longer a question of painting what was real, nor of deceiving the eye; it was the pleasure of *vraisemblance* that touched, pleased and moved (Batteux, 1746, p. 14, 79–80).

### Imitating and Painting

#### *Imitation, Imagination, and Genius*

Imitation was also an experience in which the eye was linked to the spirit, through which one returned to the senses in order to produce the work of art. Junius thus established a summary between a sensitive approach to reality and a mental experience (Junius, 1641, I, 2). There was no contradiction between imitation and the imagination, which could never form these mental representations without the eyes (Junius, 1641, I, 2). This idea was taken up frequently, particularly by Sanderson, who defined the force of imitation by the imagination, and described the stages of the conception of a work: first, the mind placed in order the things conceived and imagined, which were received by the external senses, then they were transmitted first to judgement, then to the imagination, and finally to the memory (1658, p. 32–33). This approach was also that of the Dutch theorists, such as Hoogstraten, or Sandrart in Germany, who far from advocating the idealisation or synthesis of the things seen in order to draw a model of beauty, sought to distance themselves neither from art nor from nature, but rather to invent painting that was resembling and *vraisemblable*, a natural order, not to deceive the eye, but to create an illusion of reality.

Recognising in imitation an activity of the intellect authorised other developments, in particular with regard to the notion of genius. For De Piles, there was only genius that made it possible to notice and understand, and then to represent, the real nature of an object (that is, what needed to be imitated) through colouring (1684, p. 28–30). Batteux mentioned his intervention to adjust the composition, the drawing, the colouring, using nature as the basis (1746, p. 247, p. 12).

Because it brought the vision, imagination and judgement of the painter into play, imitation encouraged a movement of empathy in he who looked at the painting. The imitation of nature was thus also

raised up into a judgement criterion of the same value as the truth in colours, the *chiaroscuro* effect and the relief of the figures for any man of good sense and mind (Coypel, 1732, p. 30).

### *Observing and Imitating*

The assistance and respect of the rules of representation were, for French theorists such as Pader or Bosse, initially limited to geometry, arithmetic or perspective, and the practice of setting up models on a board to examine their effects, or the use of the “*carrelage idéal*” (Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 10) all of which played a part in a good imitation. But because, as Goeree suggested, the rules of art were found in the rules of nature (1670a, p. 20–21), the sensitive eye replaced, particularly in the Netherlands, Germany and England, the eye of reason. The practice of art was based on that of the observation that could be reconstituted in the broader context of the development of the experimental model that brought the natural sciences closer to art. Observation was not passive; it engendered, in the discourse of theorists such as Sandrart and Hoogstraten, an explanation for phenomena like light, colours, and passions, which the painters considered to be like sciences. This experimental and empirical approach considerably renewed the role of the spirit in imitation. It was no longer enough, as described by Dufresnoy and other theorists, to have “the original in one’s head” (*l’original dans la tête*), that is, to represent or have present in one’s mind the effect of the work, of which the painting produced on the canvas would be the copy (1668, p. 44), nor to conceive good order. Observation and reason made it possible to reconcile two, apparently contradictory, notions, that of the natural and that of decency in the name of a natural order created by the artist imitating it.

### *Imitation and Choice*

The question of choice in imitation was essential, particularly for the French theorists. Since the position taken by Dolce, updated by the translation provided by Vleughels, for which the aim of art was to represent what God had made in a manner that resembled reality, and thus go beyond nature by showing all the perfections of beauties in a single body (1735, p. 141, 177), or Baillet de Saint-Julien, for whom the painter had to be the “panegyrist of nature” (*panégyriste de la nature*), and for that to remove or add (1750, p. 10–11), all approaches could be found in the writings on art. They did not reveal a pertinent

evolution, but rather different sensibilities. The “good choice” (*bon choix*) for De Piles gave value to a painting, it was nevertheless not necessary to excessively embellish nature by means of too much artifice (1708, p. 261). The question of selective or elective imitation no longer focused on the choice of the beautiful, but on the subject. Imitating the most excellent things was more difficult than painting deformities (Sanderson, 1658, p. 32–33). It was thus that De Piles distinguished the quality of the Flemish painters for imitating nature, and their inability to make a good choice (1668, *Remarque 37*, p. 66–70). When he recommended choosing subjects that move and attract our attention, Du Bos rejected genre painting of Teniers (1610–1690) or Wouwerman (1619–1668) for example, or the village scenes that amuse us but do not touch us (1740, p. 50–52).

## Models and Manners

### *Models*

The question of imitating nature was not limited to the representation of nature, or to that of the figure in a portrait. This notion applied also to history and figures. Junius defined disposition and order as the representation of a natural order (III, V, 3), and incited painters to imitate life for the choice of circumstances (III, V, 4). The same was true for the general expression of a painting, which appeared to be synonymous with representation and imitation, and which had to establish a just relationship between the history and the various elements of which it was composed (customs and accessories), and the figures through the expression of passions. Imitating the truth of the action was one of the challenges that the painters of the 17th century had to face, and which provoked major debates in France in the context of the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*. Although this concern was not absent, the northern theorists such as Goeree, Sandrart or Hoogstraten were more in search of the representation of movement in their histories (Goeree, 1670a, p. 35). This even resulted in considerable freedom in the representation of the figures, for which the proportions were less important than the rendering of the flesh. The predominance of life to the detriment of beauty was furthermore the subject of many criticisms regarding the Flemish painters, including Rubens (1577–1640) in whom Aglionby regretted the poor choice, and that he explained by the fact that either in their countries they did not

have the natural beauties, or that they had not seen the works of the Ancients (1685, p. 104–106).

Returning often to the precepts of Leonardo da Vinci when it came to rendering nature, the writings on painting in the Netherlands, and to a lesser extent in Germany, devoted long passage to nature (landscape, animals, flowers . . .). Van Mander was the first to mention the possibility of a rendering by painting of inimitable things (lightning, water, the sky, air), thus giving the artist the ability to go beyond the imitation of the visible. Hoogstraten, himself a painter of *trompe-l'œil*, developed the idea that, through artifice, painting could become a mirror of nature, meaning that things that did not exist, existed and deceived (1678, p. 24). The paradigm of this type of imitation was the anecdote of the grapes of Zeuxis, which was often quoted in the writings on art.

The discourse on the representation of nature was so uncommon in France that the chapter on landscape in De Piles' *Cours de peinture* is an exception. On the contrary, that on the ancient model was very significant, and ancient sculptures played a fundamental role. De Piles assimilated them to the good choice capable of perfecting art (1708, p. 150). Audran rejected the live model, which always had proportion defects, and considered ancient sculpture as the only model that made it possible to attain the beauty of nature (1683, n.p.).

### *Imitating and Copying*

Leonardo da Vinci's assertion that the manner of another should not be imitated, at the risk of being called not the son, but the nephew of Nature (1651, chap. XXIV, p. 6) was often repeated in the theoretical writings of the 17th and 18th centuries. It was nevertheless on the subject of imitation that all teachings on painting were based. Félibien proposed as definition:

TO IMITATE: to imitate the manner of an Ancient or a master; this is not copying, line for line, but forming a similar idea, and following the same manner.

(*IMITER: imiter la manière de l'antique ou d'un maître: ce n'est pas copier trait pour trait, mais c'est se former une idée semblable, et suivre une même manière.* (1676, p. 624)

Junius undertook to not limit the ornaments, but rather to consider the inner force, the grace (*bevalligheid*), and to take one's inspiration from the aim of the ancient masters (I, III. 8). Goeree mentioned a

learned eye (*geleerde Oogh*) for understanding what the master wanted to say and do, and which he opposed to the attitude of a child who looks at a whole composition, figure by figure (1670b, p. 119–120). De Piles did not say anything different when he stressed that imitating things of good taste (the ancients or the masters) aroused the spirit.

We have just said that it is necessary, through considerable practice, to accustom the eyes to judging, and the hand to working with ease: if these habits are formed on poor models, taste will be developed imperceptibly, for that which enters often into the mind through the eyes, remains there for a long time, and makes a strong impression there.

*(Nous venons de dire qu'il faut par un grand exercice accoustumer les yeux à juger, & la main à travailler avec facilité: si ces habitudes se contractent sur de mauvais modeles, le goust s'y fera insensiblement: car ce qui entre souvent dans l'esprit par les yeux, y demeure long-tems, & y fait une forte impression.)* (1684, p. 16)

Similarly, for Sandrart *abkopieren* (copy) and *nachahmen* (imitate) made it possible to acquire a good manner and to attain perfection (1675, p. 73). And Goeree recognised that attentive observation of engravings and drawings allowed the qualities of a composition to enter into the spirit in such a way that it became a guide for your own compositions (1670a, p. 63–64).

Imitating the Ancients and the great masters thus played an absolutely fundamental role in the teaching of painting. Copying the human figure from the drawings (or engravings) of the masters, or from the Ancients (in marble or plaster), or from nature was essential, but could nevertheless take different paths, either by searching for the composition of a beautiful figure, choosing the most beautiful parts (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 168–170), or, as proposed by Sandrart, by acquiring the rules for drawing in a natural manner from a live model, in accordance with the aim of the academies (1675, p. 61). The order of the learning process was also fixed and varied little. After learning perspective and geometry, the following stages were based on imitation: drawing from the Ancients, then copying from the masters in order to learn each part, and finally drawing and painting from nature. This final stage made it possible to acquire the freedom on which the force or weakness necessary for the subject depended (Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 11–12).

The difference between copying and imitating (*abkopieren*, *nachahmen*) was thus fundamental. It was nevertheless decided depend-

ing on whether one was situated in a diachronic perspective, and on whether one considered the copying of a young painter during his learning period, or the imitation of a painter. Two engravings in the Latin edition of Sandrart's *Teutsche Academie* (1683), clearly illustrated these two concepts: the first presented the copying monkeys in the manner of Teniers (foreword), the second showed the real allegory of imitation, taken in a positive sense, presenting *Pictura*, assisted by Mercury and the winged figure of Art, painting the goddess Earth followed by Vertumnus, and Pomona and Silenus, illustrating the creative spirit (title page).

### Truth and *vraisemblance* in Imitation

The discourse on imitation went beyond the very common idea that the most perfect imitation of nature had, thanks to the drawing and colour, to deceive the eye (De Piles, 1684, p. 3–4). From this notion, De Piles introduced that of effect. The painting had to call out to the spectator through the force of its imitation, and if this were not the case, the theorist concluded that Nature had been badly imitated (1677, p. 20, 1708, p. 6). Only a painting that carried within it the nature of Truth made this effect possible, and this quality, without which nothing was pleasing, was raised up to the role of the aim of all sciences and arts whose object was imitation (De Piles, 1708, p. 29). The works of Rubens were, in this respect, exemplary for indicating that the truth was imitating the character of one's model (De Piles, 1708, p. 30). The rendering of the flesh which resembled flesh was also paradigmatic for Coppel (1726 (1732), p. 33). This corresponded to what the French theorist called the composed truth or perfect truth, that is, a perfect imitation of nature, a *vraisemblable* beauty which appeared to be more true than the truth (De Piles, 1708, p. 30–35), and to which he granted more of a prize than to the simple truth, which was an imitation of nature, undoubtedly sensitive and alive, or to the ideal Truth which was a choice of perfections that could not be found in a single model. This quality of *vraisemblance* was also that which the northern theorists sought, and which Sandrart recognised in what was done *nach dem Leben*. Similarly, Hoogstraten expressed in his *naer het leven* the visual properties of nature which, through their effects, were liable to create an illusion and thus attract the spectator's gaze.

For all the theorists, imitation remained one of the main sources creating pleasure (Batteux, 1746, p. 16–18). In the first half of the

18th century, the debate moved in a new direction. The question of imitation displaced the effect and the search for truth, which nevertheless remained a concern for Diderot, towards the question of artifice, maintaining a confusion of meaning between imitate and copy. This was revelatory of the thought of Du Bos, who spoke of superficial imitation, an artificial imitation, and wondered about the fact that the copy bound us more than the original (1719 [1740], p. 26–27, p. 66–67). Other important issues started to emerge in the 18th century on the subject, lowly or noble, which incited emotion, and around the imitation of the art of the Ancients with the publication of *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und der Bildhauerkunst* (*Reflections on the imitation of Greek works in painting and sculpture*, 1755 [1756]). They were also revealed by the inclusion in Watelet and Levesque's *Encyclopédie méthodique* of wide reuse of articles by Reynolds and Mengs.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Aglionby, 1685; Alberti, 1435 [1540]; Audran, 1683; Baillet De Saint-Julien, 1750; Batteux, 1746; Coypel, 1732; Da Vinci, 1651; De Piles, 1668; De Piles, 1677; De Piles, 1684; De Piles, 1708; Dolce/Vleughels, 1735; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; Goeree 1670 a, 1670 b; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Pader, 1653 [1657]; Richardson, 1719, [1657]; Sanderson, 1658; Sandrart, 1675; Sandrart, 1683; Smith, 1692; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Van Mander, 1604; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1792; Winckelmann, 1755 [1756].

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Improvement ⇒ Ornament  
 Inclination ⇒ Painter  
 Indecorum ⇒ Convenience  
 Industry ⇒ Practice  
 Intent ⇒ Idea

## INVENTION

fr.: *invention*  
 germ.: *Invention, Erfindung*  
 nl.: *inventie, uitvinding, vinding*  
 it.: *invenzione*  
 lat.: *inventio*

**Composition, disposition, drawing, sketch, part of painting, subject, imagination, mind, genius, talent, imitation, choice**

*Invention was a complex concept in the art theory of the 17th century, on the edges of the formation of an idea in the understanding of the*



painter, and of its material expression in a drawing or a painting. Based on ancient rhetoric (Cicero's *De inventione* and *De oratore*), the notion was redefined for painters by Alberti, who recommended that they keep the company of poets in order to better understand history.

### Invention and Representation

Two approaches to invention can be found in the writings on art. Both came from art theory in the Renaissance.

The first was based on the reconciliation between invention, the drawing or sketch (*schizzo*) and the idea. It was brought up to date in the 17th century by the translation of Leonardo Da Vinci's *Traitté*, which defined the *first invention* as "[ . . . ] the first study of the composition of histories must start by bringing together a few lightly sketched figures, that is, created in two strokes" ([ . . . ] *la premiere estude des compositions d'histoires doit commencer par mettre ensemble quelques figures legerement esquissées c'est-à dire touchées en deux coups*, 1651, chap. LXXXXVI, p. 30), and of which Fréart provided the following definition: "Sketch: this term is still entirely Italian, even though it is now highly intelligible in French. It is like a first crayon drawing or a light outline of whatever work we are still meditating. The Italian says schizz" (*Esquisse: Ce terme est encore tout Italien, quoy qu'il soit présentement fort intelligible en françois. C'est comme un premier crayon ou une légère ébauche de quelqu'ouvrage qu'on médite encore. L'Italien dit schizz*, Fréart, 1662, n.p.). Junius also defined invention as a first, well-designed sketch, with simple outlines (1641, III, II.12), emphasising that the perfection of the work was obtained from this simple drawing (1641, III, V.3). This first sketch also made it possible to see the placing of the different elements (1641, III, V.3). Sandrart also mentioned invention in the chapter on drawing (1675, p. 60) and in that of history painting (1675, p. 79). The conception expressed by the German theorist was thus similar to the practice of Poussin, who threw down on paper a light sketch of the composition (*eine schlichte Skizz der Ordinanzeien*, 1675, p. 368), as described in the biography of the French artist. This first sketch put into shape the thought of the painter. The theorists of the 17th century certainly recognised the agreement between the different parts of the history and the *Design* of the painter as the essential quality of invention (Aglionby, 1685, p. 101–102), but under the effect of the growing importance of colour, the notion of invention was considered from a new perspective. The interest shown by Sandrart in the coloured

sketch, or the definition that De Piles gave of it, illustrates this change well, and plays a part in detaching invention from the drawing (*disegno*) to reconcile it with the painting:

The Sketch is a small Painting which contains in short all the Parts of the Painting, all that one can paint in real size. It is genuinely the guide for the Worker and the model for the Work. The Painter must include in it not only all his fire for the Invention, the Disposition and the *Chiaroscuro*, but also determine all the colours, as much for the particular objects as for the union and harmony of the whole.

*(L'Esquisse est un petit Tableau qui contient en raccourci dans toutes les Parties de la Peinture, tout ce que l'on peut peindre en grand. C'est proprement le guide de l'Ouvrier & le modele de l'Ouvrage. Le Peintre y doit mettre non seulement tout son feu pour l'Invention, pour la Disposition & pour le Clair-obscur; mais encore y arrester toutes les couleurs tant pour les objets en particulier, que pour l'union & l'harmonie du tout ensemble).*

(1684, p. 76)

The second conception of invention, namely the setting up of the history, had even greater fortune in the 17th and 18th centuries. It also came from the ancient tradition and the Italian Renaissance, and more particularly of Dolce, who distinguished it from the drawing. Invention was considered to be a part of the painting:

[ . . . ] all that concerns the painting can be divided into three parts, invention, drawing and colouring . . . The invention is the history, or fable, that the painter himself chooses, or which is given to him by someone else as the subject that he must execute [ . . . ]. Let us start with invention, in which I find that there are many parts, of which order and the conveniences are the principle.

*([ . . . ] tout ce qui regarde la peinture se peut diviser en trois parties, invention, dessein, & coloris . . . L'invention est l'histoire, ou la fable, que le peintre se choisit de lui meme, ou qui lui est donné par quelqu'autre pour sujet, qu'il doit executer [ . . . ]. Commençons par l'invention dans la quelle je trouve, qu'il entre beaucoup de parties, parmi les quelles l'ordonnance, & les convenances sont les principals).* (Dolce/Vleughels, 1735, p. 151–153)

Invention as a definition of history occupied a key position in the theory of art. Junius (1641, III, I, 1), Sanderson (1658, p. 45), and Restout (1681, p. 114) considered that the terms *invention* and *history* were synonymous, as did Félibien (1666, 1<sup>er</sup> *Entretien*, p. 47–48); and De Piles assimilated it to the subject or the argument:

Invention in relation to Painting can be considered in three ways: it is simply Historic, or Allegorical, or Mystical. [ . . . ] I use here the

word History in the broadest sense: I include all that can fix the idea of the Painter, or instruct the Spectator, and I say that simply Historic Invention is a choice of objects, which simply by themselves represent the subject.

*(L'Invention par rapport à la Peinture se peut considerer de trois manieres: elle est, ou Historique simplement, ou Allegorique, ou Mystique. [ . . . ] Je me sers ici du mot d'Histoire dans un sens plus étendu: j'y comprends tout ce qui peut fixer l'idée du Peintre, ou instruire le Spectateur, & je dis que l'Invention simplement Historique est un choix d'objets, qui simplement par eux-mêmes représentent le sujet).* (De Piles, 1708, p. 53)

To invent a history in painting well, the painter had to make himself master of the history, considering how to enrich it, and maintain it within the limits of likelihood (Richardson, 1725, p. 41). And La Font de Saint-Yenne regretted that most painters were “poor inventors, because they study so little and read so rarely” (*peu inventeurs, parce qu'ils sont peu studieux & rares lecteurs*, 1747, p. 77–78).

Invention was nevertheless not limited to history. Da Vinci had already associated invention and composition (1651, chap. CLXXXII, p. 59). Dufresnoy used the term *machina* (translated as *machine* by De Piles) to express invention:

{INVENTION first part of the Painting.} Finally I get to the subject, and I find first of all a bare canvas: \*where it is necessary to lay out the entire Machine (so to speak) of your Painting, and the thought of an easy and powerful Genius, \*which is precisely what we call Invention. (*{INVENTION premiere partie de la Peinture.} Enfin j'entre en matiere, & je trouve d'abord une toile nue: \*où il faut disposer toute la Machine (pour ainsi dire) de vostre Tableau, & la pensée d'un Genie facile & puissant, \*qui est justement ce que nous appellons Invention.*)

(Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668, p. 11)

De Piles explained the use of this technical term, which recalled an adjustment of the various parts through the double meaning that he gave to the term *invention*, distinguishing it from history which required a choice, and the distribution of the different elements in the painting (the figures and the groups) which created the harmony or the Whole of the painting. The invention and disposition were intimately linked and together formed the composition (1668, *Remarque* 78, p. 83–85). Restout also made the same distinction and, of the five parts of painting that he defined, placed it first: “Invention, or History, which includes the Order or Disposition” (*L'Invention, ou l'Histoire, qui comprend l'Ordonnance ou Disposition*, 1681, p. 114).

Like Dolce had already done (Dolce/Vleughels, 1735, p. 151–153), certain theorists associated invention, understood in the sense of order, with the concept of convenience. Fréart defined *costume* as the link between invention and expression of the subject (1662, p. 118). Invention was thus no longer simply the disposition but rather the manner of expressing the history or the fable of the subject. The two parts of which it was made up, that is, order and decorum (or costume or convenience) thus had a precise function: the disposition of the parts of the history should allow the spectator to imagine the history, and must include nothing that was absurd or discordant (Aglionby, 1685, p. 115–119). De Piles abandoned the three-way division of painting (invention/drawing/colouring) that he had given previously (1684, p. 3–4) and included invention in the composition (1715, p. 3). This division of the parts of painting was that taken up by Dezallier (1745, p. III-IV), and Marsy no longer included an entry for this notion, referring directly to *composition*.

This did not mean that the interest that this concept provoked had been abandoned: it was the sign of a change in perspective. When Dezallier d'Argenville declared that the composition “which includes invention and disposition, is the poetics of painting; more noble than the other two, it depends on the genius and imagination of the painter” (*qui comprend l'invention & la disposition, est la poétique de la peinture; plus noble que les deux autres, elle dépend du génie & de l'imagination du peintre*, 1745, p. III-IV), he was part of the extension of a discourse that raised questions about the painter's creative activity.

### Invention and Mind

Above all, invention had to be conceived in the mind (Sandrart, 1679, p. 19; Aglionby, 1685, p. 121–122); Dupuy du Grez used the expression “conceive with the mind and create with the hand” (1699, p. 285). De Piles proposed that the “Painting be painted in your head before being painted on the canvas. [ . . . ]” (*Que le tableau soit peint dans vostre teste devant que de l'estre sur la toile. [ . . . ]*, De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 78*, p. 83–85).

Da Vinci had already raised the question of the search for the “means of awakening the mind, and exciting the imagination to produce several diverse inventions” (*moyen d'éveiller l'esprit, & d'exciter l'imagination à produire plusieurs inventions diverses*, 1651, chap. XVI, p. 4). All theorists recognised the role of the mind in the conception of a painting. It was

thanks to this mental faculty that the painter ordered, disposed and created the variety of expression. Junius theorised the link between the mind and the imagination. Invention (*inventie*) was the result of the power of the mind (*de kracht onses ghemoeds*), which imagined a living presentation (Junius, 1641, III, I, 5). Imagination (*phantasie*) was, for the Dutch theorist, the mother of all invention (1641, III, I, 11). Hoogstraten evoked reason or intelligence (*verstand*, 1678, p. 88–89); Fréart spoke of the “Fire of the spirit, which excites the Imagination and makes it act” (*Feu de l’esprit, lequel excite l’Imagination et la fait agir*). De Piles distinguished two complementary qualities in a painter: fire and genius for inventing, and prudence for disposing (1677, p. 67–68).

The question of the painter’s talent was also mentioned on the subject of invention. Was the faculty for invention natural, and not “acquired by either study or work” (*s’acquièrt ny par l’estude, ny par le travail*) as proposed by Fréart (1662, p. 11)? Or could it be cultivated and enhanced, as proposed by Junius (1641, III, I, 6), De Piles (1684, p. 3–4) or Du Bos (1740, p. 5)? In order to learn how to invent and increase inventiveness, the German and Dutch theorists insisted on the need for a good apprenticeship, and on the education of the mind (Goeree, 1670 a, p. 86; Sandrart, 1675, p. 62; Sandrart, 1679, p. 12). For this purpose, knowledge was necessary as much as working from models (Van Mander, 1604, fol. 9v.; Sandrart, 1675, p. 62; Sandrart, 1679, p. 12).

### Inventiveness, Invention, Imitation

The question of invention was also raised in its relationship with imitation: was there antimony? This was resolved if we do not consider imitation as mechanical, and if, like Bosse, we make a distinction between copy and original, which he defined as an invention or a whim that came from the genius of the artist (1649, p. 10, 20, 55, 62, 66).

Junius associated the terms invention and inventiveness (*’t verstandt uytvindenskracht, die men d’inventie noemt*, 1641, III.5). Because the disposition or order (*Dispositie ofte Ordinantie*), which made up invention aimed for a living representation of the natural order (*levendighe afbeeldinghe van de naturelicke orden*), it required that the artist work carefully from nature (*naar het leven*) (Junius, 1641, III, V.3). Goeree also encouraged painters to study the works of the masters in order

to create a new invention (1670 a, p. 103–104). It was not then a question of a copy, but of an invention (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 219).

Imitation was thus an intimate and intellectual elaboration of the model provided by nature, which brought into play stimulation of the imagination. The imagination, which both received forms and created forms, occupied a key role in the relationship between invention and imitation. All that was derived from a model was effectively deposited in the mind. And the models, or nature, did not alter this faculty for invention which appeared to be inexhaustible and which had the possibility for endlessly regenerating itself.

Poussin's opinion, as reported by Bellori, that the novelty of painting did not lie in a subject that had never been treated, but in a new disposition and new expression, found an echo in the writings of Du Bos, who attributed to invention the novelty of a painting:

For it is the invention of these circumstances that the poet constitutes in painting. How many crucifixes have been painted since Painters exist? However, Artists gifted with genius have not found that this subject has been exhausted by the thousands of paintings already made.

*(Or c'est l'invention de ces circonstances qui constituë le poëte en peinture. Combien a-t-on fait de crucifimens depuis qu'il est des Peintres? Cependant les Artisans doüez de génie, n'ont pas trouvé que ce sujet fût épuisé par mille tableaux déjà faits).* (Du Bos, 1740, p. 217–218)

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## Sources

Aglionby, 1685; Bosse, 1649; Da Vinci, 1651; De Piles, 1684; De Piles, 1708; Dolce/Vleughels, 1735; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Félibien, 1666–1688; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Goeree 1670 a; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747; Restout, 1681; Richardson, 1715 [1725]; Sandrart, 1675 et 1679.

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# J

## JUDGEMENT

fr.: *jugement*  
germ.: *Urteil*  
nl.: *oordeel, oordeelskracht*  
it.: *giudizio*  
lat.: *judicium*

**Understanding, disposition, choice, mind, spirit, knowledge, science of a connoisseur, eye, taste, criticism, truth, perfection, genius, talent**

*From the Renaissance, judgement or giudizio appeared as an essential concept in art theory, both as a quality of the painter and also as an ability giving legitimacy to his status of artist. The judgement was manifested in the choice made by the painter throughout the creation of his work, as much in its conception as in the execution itself. In the classical period, judgement also designated the appreciation the spectator brought to the works: this double use of the term finally gave it a broader meaning. To judge a work, the spectator had to understand the issues associated with the parts of the painting, and evaluate in turn the intentions of the painter. Reason and knowledge were essential, but the judgement also implied a less tangible dimension, with the painter making use of his talent and the spectator of his senses. Judgement was the faculty for distinguishing good from bad, and was gradually likened to a quest for truth, then participating in the progress made in the arts, thus making it possible for criticism to establish its status in the 18th century.*



### From Reason to Talent, from Knowledge to Experience of the Sensitive

Initially restricted to the domain of the painter, designating his appreciation of his work throughout the pictorial creation process, judgement became, in the classical period, a dual notion, which was also used with regard to the spectator, and the vision that he had of the production of artists. Beyond this dual use, judgement was based on principles of different natures, which makes the lexical evolution of the term all the more complex as it becomes confused and intermingled with similar concepts such as reason, understanding or common sense.

For painters, judgement was likened to a choice based on the intervention of reason, to which was added a core of knowledge liable to be learned. As stipulated by Van Mander for example, the painter had to act with *ghesont verstandt* [good intelligence], whilst making use of *oeffeningh* [constant exercise] (1604, II, 3, fol. 8v), a precept that could be found in the writings of a great many theorists throughout the 17th century. Van Mander's Dutch compatriots in turn assimilated good judgement to "sound judgement" (Angel, 1642, p. 35–36) or *verstandigh oordeel* [reasonable judgement] (Goeree, 1670, p. 110–111). This revealed an overlap between judgement and reason, which could be read in all authors, such as the Englishman Salmon, who encouraged painters to work "by reason in [their] own judgment" (1672, p. 9–10) while Sandrart made the association in an even more explicit manner by linking judgement and intelligence. He thus defined judgement as a *nachsinnen des Verstandes* [reflection of the intellect], the aim of which was to find the perfect balance *mit Verstand und gutem Urtheil* [with reason and good judgement] (1675, I, livre 3, p. 60–64). After that, and in order to guarantee what is likened here to the good understanding of the painter, the painter had to make use in parallel of his practice and knowledge, acquisition of which seemed to be an essential prior condition. The need for constant practice was omnipresent. Dufresnoy thus recommended "continuous practice" (*continue pratique*) to allow judgement to gain strength and reach "its maturity through the years" (*parvenu à sa maturité par les années*, 1668, p. 52). It was a learning curve that associated *kennis* and *oordeel* [knowledge and judgement] as a means of implementing his full ability to judge (Goeree, 1670, p. 30–31; Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 36). Finally, for the English, practice took precedence over knowledge, and Browne or Aglionby equally

privileged the work of the hand (1675, p. 8–9; 1685, p. 8–9 and 24–26).

Beyond this dialectic between reason and practice, another, more empirical meaning of the term emerged in the texts. It focused on the very nature of the reason or “good intelligence” of the painter, which the authors defined as a disposition of the mind and, by extension, as an innate quality. For Da Vinci, judgement was thus similar to a “talent of the mind” (*talent d’esprit*, 1651, p. 89), an expression that can be found in a very similar formulation in the work of Félibien, with the “force of the mind” (*force de l’esprit*), and which, according to the French theorist, depended on the genius of the painter and could not be taught (*4<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1672, p. 402–403; *8<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1685, p. 310–311; *9<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1688, p. 113–114 and 124). These expressions found their equivalents in English with the terms *skill* or *strength of the Mind* in Aglionby for example (1685, p. 8–9). The involvement of the eye, which helped to form the judgement of the painter and guide his hand, was also emphasised (Browne, 1675, p. 1; Richardson, 1725, p. 24–25). In the mid-18th century, these bases were still evident in the writings of Dezallier d’Argenville, who linked judgement to genius, or to “the elevation of thought” (*l’élévation de la pensée*) and the “character of the spirit” (*caractère de l’esprit*) in opposition to the “character of the hand” (1745–1755, I, p. III and XXIII–XXIV). Far from being contradictory, these two combinations of judgement were instead perfectly compatible with, on the one hand, discernment coming from the painter’s reason and, on the other, a propensity to make sound or reasonable choices likened to a form of good sense and which then involved predispositions that were more innate than assimilated.

What was true for the painter was also partly true for the spectator. Junius evoked for example the need to preserve *ghesonden oordeels* [sane judgements] in order to be able to judge painting (1641, p. 52–53), while Félibien recalled that judgement consisted in “discerning whether things had been done with reason and order” (*discerner si les choses sont faites avec raison & avec ordre*, *1<sup>er</sup> Entretien*, 1666, p. 31). But with regard to the judgement of the spectator, theorists insisted less on the intervention of reason, and more on the need for the assimilation of knowledge and study. Félibien also evoked for example the “need for some study” (*besoin de quelque étude*) to make it possible for men to make good judgements (*1<sup>er</sup> Entretien*, 1666, p. 31), just as De Piles demanded that the spectator have “a mind of great breadth” (*l’esprit d’une grande étendue*) and to have all the parts of painting in order

to make a “sane” judgement of a painting (1677, Préface and p. 11). These were principles which, with regard to the spectator, were still at the forefront in the 18th century with Dezallier who repeated word for word the statements by De Piles (1745–1755, I, p. XXXVII), or with Batteux (1746, p. 112). All these elements once again situated judgement on the side of reason and knowledge by defining it as an operation of the mind, built on understanding and knowledge.

Here again, another component of the spectator’s judgement was expressed through the texts and occupied an increasingly important position: the experience of the sensitive. Junius provided us with a description of this approach to the work by the spectator who, thanks to his innate knowledge and the simple habit of the eye (*d’enckele ghewoonte sijner ooghen*), can understand and judge the excellence of a painting (1641, p. 348). While he esteemed that this ability to observe was applicable to analysing the composition, drawing and colours, he nevertheless associated it with a lesser degree in relation to the *rechtsinnigh oordeel* [just judgement] which made it possible to evaluate the invention, figures and their expressions thanks to the knowledge of the connoisseur. This was a hierarchy of judgements that Félibien explained even further, opposing the judgement of the eye on the one hand, and the judgement of reason on the other, or the agreement with *vraisemblance* (*10<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1688, p. 288–292). This hierarchy nevertheless tended to dissipate among his contemporaries and in the 18th century. Thus Sandrart mentioned both reason and the soul as the parties involved in the spectator’s judgement (1675, I, 3, p. 103), whereas De Piles granted great importance to the effect of surprise, stating with regard to paintings, that it was necessary “to look at them as if you had never seen one and to make a judgement in good faith without wanting to be too much of a Connoisseur, and prefer those that surprise the most. For the eyes of a man of spirit, although new to Painting, must be touched by a beautiful Painting” (*les regarder comme si jamais vous n’en aviez veu, & en juger de bonne foy sans vouloir trop faire le Connoisseur, & préférer ceux qui vous surprendront davantage. Car les yeux d’un homme d’esprit, quoy que tout noeufs en Peinture, doivent estre touchez d’un beau Tableau [ . . . ], 1677, p. 20*). From the experience of the sensitive, there was thus a gradual shift towards the experience of the senses, with pleasure and agreeableness fully claimed by Dezallier or Batteux, who incited the spectator to “feel the beauty” (*sentir le beau*, 1745–1755, I, p. XXXVII; 1746, p. 61–63).

Finally, the reason that was the basis for judgement—without effacing it—came closer to common sense that operated in two movements: on the one hand, through the acquisition of knowledge, through practice, through observation and through study, and, on the other, through a more sensitive dimension in which the innate and the senses also had a role to play.

### Judgement in Practice

In addition to the description of the principles on which judgement was based, the authors also described its application. In the 17th century, judgement was an essential prerequisite for a painter (Angel, 1642, p. 35). It was conceived as a continuation of Vasari's theory of *giudizio*, that is, as an auto-evaluation approach that accompanied the artist through all stages of the execution (Da Vinci, 1651, p. 89–90).

As such, it was first of all intimately linked to the concept of drawing. Reproducing for example Vasari's concept of *Idea*, understood as the source of the drawing, Van Mander and Sandrart directly associated judgement with the artist's ability to conceive (Van Mander, 1604, II, 3, fol. 8v; Sandrart, 1675, I, 3, p. 60). Whereas Sandrart combined *Idea* or concept and judgement, Van Mander insisted on its link with practice (*oeffeningh*). Then, through the intermediary of the imagination, judgement intervened at the time of the invention and what Félibien called the "first thoughts" (*premières pensées*, 9<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, 1688, p. 37–38). Judgement was thus likened to the painter's ability to choose well, particularly with regard to his models and in particular the most beautiful (Félibien, 8<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, 1685, p. 321–322; Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 36). All authors also reiterated its involvement in disposition (Peacham, 1634, XI, p. 42–43; Sandrart, 1675, I, 3, p. 60; Browne, 1675, p. 1; De Piles, 1677, p. 11; Aglionby, 1685, p. 8–9), composition (Lairesse, 1701, p. 29) or order (Dezallier, 1745–1755, t. 1, p. XXIII–XXIV). Perceptible through the line according to Hoogstraten, Pader and Richardson (1657, p. 5; 1678, p. 36; 1725, p. 24–25), it also had to show itself in the rendering of the proportions of the figures (Junius, 1641, VII.12, p. 348; Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 134–135) "and of true proportion" (Salmon 1672, p. 9–10; Browne, 1675, p. 8–9). Finally, a good judgement still governed the distribution of colours, light and shadow. One could recognise a judgement that was "well pared down and devoid of any affectation" (*bien épuré & dégagé de toute*

affection, Testelin, s.d [1693–1694], p. 29 *bis*) in a measured choice in the disposition and distribution of tints.

From a broader perspective, Junius and Goeree stressed the role of judgement in the imitation of the great masters, which required just and judicious judgement (*verstandigh en rechtsinnigh ordeal*, 1670, p. 102–103; 1641, p. 27–28) for, guiding the painter in the choice of the parts to copy, it preserved him from eventual pitfalls such as simple imitation (Dolce/Vleughels, 1735, p. 193). For this purpose, Dupuy du Grez, Lairesse and still Goeree encouraged following only artists to whom one attributed intelligent judgement (1699, p. 316; 1701, p. 29; 1682, I, p. 7–8). Finally, the artist's judgement extended to the technique and how it was implemented, particularly with regard to that of fresco and oil painting (Peacham, 1661, XIII, p. 130–131; Aglionby, 1685, p. 24–26). This quality thus characterised the dexterity or skill, and Dupuy du Grez attributed it to *making* the effect of a good judgement (1699, p. 248).

Beyond this, judgement played a fundamental role in the decency or propriety of a work (Félibien, 1679, vol. 3, p. 181; Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 316), as well as for the whole of the painting (De Piles, 1668, p. 83–85). It was not by chance if certain theorists specified that the painter could become “an excellent worker” (*un excellent ouvrier*, Da Vinci, 1651, CCLXXIV, p. 89), or even equal the great masters if his judgement was solid enough, strong or particular (*sonderbar*, Sandrart, 1675, I, 3), for a *great judgment*, as indicated regularly by the English authors, led the painter to perfection (Peacham, 1661, XIII, p. 128; Salmon, 1672, p. 9–10; Aglionby, 1685, p. 8–9; Richardson, 1719, p. 63–65).

### From Judgement to Criticism

These various fields of application for judgement raised another question: did all judgements have the same value? With regard to the completed pictorial work, the authors seemed unanimous. If the painter's judgement intervened in the execution of the work, this judgement no longer prevailed over the work. Repeating Da Vinci, Van Mander in the early 17th century, then Dufresnoy or Sandrart in the second part of the century all agreed that there was nothing more deceptive than the judgement of a man with regard to his own work (Sandrart, 1679, III, p. 17) and that it was necessary to face outside regards in order to not become too far removed from truth. In

their wake, several theorists insisted on the qualities specific to the judgement of the art lover or connoisseur. Junius thus repeated the need to exercise one's judgement alone and far from others in order to reach a sane and sound judgement (1641, p. 59 and 52–53), a precept that was contradicted by Hoogstraten, who recommended confronting one's judgement of a work with that of other spectators (1678, p. 195). This was a tension that Fréart expressed in turn, recognising in everyone a capacity to judge, whilst nevertheless deploring that “the vulgar confuses itself when saying its feelings” (*le vulgaire se mesle d'en dire son sentiment*, 1662, préface). Without questioning the spectator's judgement either, Félibien distinguished the ability to judge from that of bringing together knowledge, before finally designating the “completed” (*achevé*) judgement as that of being able to “understand the artifice” (*comprendre l'artifice*) of the painter (*1<sup>er</sup> Entretien*, 1666, préface; *9<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1688, p. 293–294). Although they were all in agreement regarding the value of an outside judgement, the nuances found in the authors of the 17th century bore witness to a shift that took place within the texts, with discourse that focused increasingly on the criteria likely to establish the validity of the judgement with regard to the works. This was also the predominant concern that explained the progressive rarefaction of judgement, understood as the artist's discernment during creation and execution in favour of a meaning close to the value judgement that dominated in a large number of the texts from the 18th century.

From this perspective, the relativity of the judgement was put forward at the same level as its propensity to be universal. The relationship with time and the effects of fashion were in this sense questioned by several authors. “The new inventions” (*Les inventions nouvelles*) which tended to shine too brightly, for example, were denounced by Félibien (*1<sup>er</sup> Entretien*, 1666, p. 31), whereas in the context of the *Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns*, Perrault deplored “the common opinion that almost always regulates merit in accordance with ancientness” (*l'opinion commune qui regle presque toujours le merite selon l'ancienneté*, 1688, p. 198–199). From the same perspective, and not without a more personal interest, Lairese regretted the lack of consideration for the art of Van Dyck or Rembrandt and this, in favour of the manner of the Italians; he blamed the *dwaaze oordeelaars* [prejudiced judges] and the public that followed their opinion (1712, p. 18). In these different cases, the accent was thus placed on the limitations of judgement. An additional term again intervened to distinguish on the one hand what

came from a general opinion and, on the other, a more personal inclination, with taste. Félibien first justified the diversity of the regards given to a work and specified that “the tastes of lovers of painting are no less different than those of Painters; and this difference in taste is the cause of the diversity that can be found in the works of some and the judgements of others” (*les goust des amateurs de la peinture ne sont pas moins differents que ceux des Peintres; & cette difference de gousts est la cause de la diversité qui se trouve dans les travaux des uns & dans les jugemens des autres*, 8<sup>e</sup> Entretien, 1685, p. 304–305). This was an idea that was returned to at the start of the 18th century by De Piles who recalled that everyone “judged on the basis of their taste” (*juge selon son gout*, 1708, p. 135).

All these reservations tended to disappear in the course of the 18th century. Effectively, Batteux swept aside the considerations of his predecessors by opposing the notion of natural taste, which he qualified as constant and “independent of whim” (*indépendant du caprice*, 1746, p. 61–63). In other words, an appreciation cleared of all subjectivity and which was used to bring legitimacy to criticism. Thus for La Font de Saint Yenne, the regard of the public could not be considered to be false when the judgement was common to the greatest number, a consensual dimension that confirmed its validity (1747, p. 3 and 6–7). It was thus with the authors of the 18th century that a new dialectic developed. There where the theorists of the 17th century such as Félibien or De Piles who perceived judgement as an ability to “distinguish good from bad” (*discerner le bien d’avec le mal*, 9<sup>e</sup> Entretien, 1688, p. 37–38; 1677, p. 11), and their successors took up this argument to make judgement a quest for truth. For Du Bos, the feeling of the public must for example remain the foundation: it guided him and made it possible to avoid any errors so as to better define the merit of a work, the whole from the point of view of truth (1740, p. 296–297). This was a discourse similar to that of Dezallier, for whom, for example, it was a question of “distinguishing the good from the bad in a work” (*distinguer le bon & le mauvais d’un ouvrage*) so as to ultimately form “a just idea of the true beauty” (*une juste idée du vrai beau*, 1745–1755, t. I, p. XXII). Once again, the words of La Font de Saint Yenne came into play as the end point for all the semantic evolution of the term judgement, in which the decisions of the public were perceived as a “language of truth” (*langage de vérité*) which blended with criticism (1747, p. 6–7). Beyond this, they confirmed the status of art criticism during the Enlightenment and its integration, which was based in

part on the issues associated with judgement. These issues can be clearly perceived in the inflection between a judgement essentially defined according to its relationship with reason in the 17th century, then through the intermediary of an increasingly significant moralising dimension around the considerations of good and evil, with a judgement that declared itself as a path towards truth, in this way consolidating criticism in the 18th century.

Marianne FREYSSINET et Pierrick GRIMAUD  
[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Aglionby, 1685; Angel, 1642; Batteux, 1746; Browne, 1669; Da Vinci, 1651; De Piles, 1668, 1677, 1708; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1762; Dolce, 1557; Du Bos, 1740; Dufresnoy, 1668; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Félibien, 1666–1688; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Goeree, 1670, 1682; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1638; La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747; De Lairesse, 1701, 1712; La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648; Pader, 1653; Peacham, 1634, 1661; Perrault, 1688–1697; Richardson, 1715, 1719; Sandrart, 1675, 1679; Salmon, 1672; Testelin, 1693 or 1694; Van Mander, 1604.

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Kind  $\implies$  Genre

Knowledge  $\implies$  Judgement, Taste, Connoisseur

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## LANDSCAPE

ang.: *paysage*  
germ.: *Landschaft*  
nl.: *landskip*  
it.: *paese*

**Landship, genre, observation, light, air, figure, ornament, by-work, perspective, after nature, after the life, view, eye, *houding*, *reddering***

*The reference to the Ancient Roman painter, Ludius (Pliny, Natural History, XXXV, chap. 10, § 116–117) was a stereotype that was often cited with regard to landscape (Peacham, 1634, p. 99–100; Van Mander, 1604, 6r; Bell, 1730, p. 99–100). The Dutch origin of the term (Landtskip) was mentioned by Peacham (1634, p. 38–39) in the chapter he devoted to the subject. However, theorists from the Italian Renaissance (Alberti, De re aedificatoria, 1542; Lomazzo, 1584, VI, chap. 61, p. 473), as well as Francisco de Hollanda (1581), often referred to this pictorial genre by defining the different types. All, like Leonardo Da Vinci, recognised the need to represent the light of day and night, the air and forms of nature, but mentioning landscape still remained most often associated with sacred history or mythology. Van Mander was the first northern theorist to devote a whole chapter exclusively to landscape (Grondt, 1604, chap. VIII). The importance of this text, taken up in part by Sandrart (1675, Chap. VI) was*

*all the more considerable given that it brought up to date ideas established by Alberti and above all by Leonardo Da Vinci. It nevertheless remained in part a tributary of a poetic approach to the heroic or mythological landscapes through which the Dutch theorist proposed a differentiation depending on colour, form and season. Paradoxically, the other Dutch theorists, such as Hoogstraten or Goeree, were relatively silent on this subject. The latter spoke of it only indirectly in relation to the treatment of light and shade, or in Verlichterie-Konst (1670c, p. 4–5), to provide details about colours and blends. But this omission should no doubt be attributed to the fact that the work that he wanted to write on perspective was never published. Lairesse devoted an entire book to this genre (Book VI). The aim of the seventeen chapters was, like that of Beurs (1692), to describe the practice of landscape, or provide a basic introduction for young painters and art lovers, just like those of Preissler in Germany (Gründliche Anleitung welcher man sich im Nachzeichnen schöner Landschaften oder Prospecten, 1759). Although the model most often cited by Van Mander (1604, VIII, 36 r) or Aglionby (1685, p. 90–91) was Titian (1488–1576), whose truth and force were recognised, the manners described more commonly referred to other Flemish, Dutch or French artists.*

### From Poetic Landscape to Genre

Van Mander and Sandrart approached landscapes through a poetic description of nature in relation to the mythology inspired by Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, for which they both proposed a commentary designed for painters. This evocation, which had to awaken intellectual pleasure, was mixed with observation of nature, topographical precision and an interest in the effects of colour. Alberti had already insisted on the particular virtues of contemplating a landscape that had an effect on the soul (*De Re Aedificatoria*, Liv. 9, chap. 4), and Van Mander spoke of lightening or refreshing the mind. Sandrart also reconciled this dual approach, which appealed to both the eyes and the intellect, and suggested that the eyes of the painter, supported by the poetic evocation, allow themselves to be instructed by the sight of landscape. Visual stimulation thus played a part in the intellectual pleasure (1675, p. 70).

The parallel between painting landscape and painting history nevertheless remained dominant in the discourse of Van Mander and Sandrart. Both required the same qualities of the painter, who thus had to learn about history and landscape simultaneously. The insis-

tence on this aspect of the painter's practice came in response to the very widespread idea in theoretical writings that Italians knew how to paint figures and the Dutch how to paint landscapes (Van Mander, fol. 7r), and that Italians had Dutch painters work on the backgrounds of their works because they considered the Dutch to be experts in the art of landscape (Van Mander, fol. 16r). For this reason, a major part of the discourse on this subject was based on the confrontation between the two pictorial genres. And it was thus on the role of the figure that the positions of the two theorists diverged. Van Mander, who considered landscapes to be a genre that was less difficult than history (1604, fol. 6r.), sought through the use of the same vocabulary (*stellingh*), to establish a parallel between the disposition of figures and that of the landscape, which always remained inhabited. Sandrart rejected the role of ornament for the figures, and considered them on the contrary as additions which, as such, should not receive the most beautiful light (1675, p. 71). On the other hand, for him, trees were like the muscles of the landscape. Considering them to be living beings, he suggested an analogy between humans and plants, and gave trees a privileged place. Like atmospheric transformations, they played a part, thanks to their variety and their movement, in bringing life to the landscape, and were not considered to be additions or accessories.

The question of ornaments (*stoffagie*) in the landscape was however also touched on. Gérard de Lairese, in Book VI of *Groote Schilderboek* (1712), returned to it from the point of view of the different genres of landscape: heroic, rural or pastoral. He thus cited the modern landscape with common motifs (cabins, etc.), and opposed them to the landscapes with ancient monuments which transformed them into heroic landscapes, in the ancient style (1712, p. 349). Roger De Piles had defined the same types of landscape (1708, p. 201), but he defended the return of nature against antiquity perhaps, as proposed by Marianne Cojannot-Le Blanc, with the aim of inflecting the theory of genres. He thus made a distinction between the heroic and the rural landscape, talking about the style rather than the manner, using a novel formulation (Cojannot-Le Blanc, 2014, p. 224). On the other hand this distinction, taken up by Marsy, contributed in an even stronger manner to bringing nobility to landscapes, or even defining a genre.

The Dutch theorists also debated the question of the specialisation of painters. Going beyond the dispute between the Italians and the Flemish still cited by Van Mander, the most commonly evoked theory was that a painter had to be universal and capable of painting landscapes

and figures, with the aim of rendering the natural harmony of the landscape (Goeree, *Schilder-konst*, 1670a, p. 119–120; *Tecken-Konst*, 1670b, p. 72–73; Lairese, *Grondlegging*, 1701, p. 38–39). Although landscapes were still considered as being inferior to history painting for Richardson (1719, p. 44–45), the theory based on the hierarchy of genres elaborated by Félibien and Perrault in France (Félibien, *Préface des Conférences*, 1668, p. XV; Perrault, *La Peinture*, 1668, p. 6–9) ultimately had very little impact on the writings on art. The northern theorists defined the genre, insisting on the natural characteristics and life. They thus granted great importance to the practice of landscape painting, that is, to its invention, and its execution, which they described in their writings.

### The Practice of Landscape Painting

#### *Invention*

The choice of landscape appeared to be a major preoccupation for theorists. For Van Mander, the choice had to aim for an agreement between the landscape, the figures represented in it, and the history, whether it was Biblical or mythological. Despite the inversion of the proportions of the figures in relation to the landscape that he suggested, the same rules of conformity had to apply to both. In a very different manner, this preoccupation was also that of Gérard de Lairese when he distinguished immobile and necessary accessories (those that belonged to the subject) from those that were mobile (figures, animals) which brought life and movement to the landscape, stressing that a good painter must be able to choose the accessories suitable for the site, and the site specific to the subject that he wanted to treat in such a manner as to create a whole (1712, p. 353–354). This aspect remained present with the French theorists, and particularly De Piles, but the latter oriented the choice of sites and figures in relation to the intelligence of *chiaroscuro* and colours. More than a representation of a history, the essential issue was to associate the truth and naivety of Nature (1715, p. 48–49). Although figures were still mentioned as being the soul of the landscape, they were considered as secondary, and even supplanted, by trees, which became, as suggested by Sandrart, the most remarkable part (*das vornehmste Stück*, 1679, p. 22) or “the greatest ornament” (*le plus grand ornement*) for De Piles (1708, p. 231–232). Certain theorists (including Sandrart), taking their inspiration greatly from the writings of Da Vinci, preferred to privilege the transformations of nature from

atmospheric effects (1675, p. 71), or according to the modifications of the seasons. These choices then corresponded to a conception of landscape that highlighted a living rendering. Based on the works of Paul Bril (v. 1553–1626) and Dutch artists who had worked in Rome, or on his experience with Claude Lorraine (v. 1600–1682), Sandrart proposed long descriptions of painting from nature. This was based both on the exactness of the topography and on the rendering of the quality of the light and colours that structured the landscape into a fluid whole into which the painter hoped to attract the gaze of the spectator (1679, p. 22).

De Piles contented himself with listing all that had to be represented in a landscape: the sites, accidents, the sky and clouds, distance and mountains, grass, rocks, mills, water, etc. (1708, p. 205), and defining the qualities, that is, the lightness of the brushstrokes, the tenderness with which the strokes were applied, the *vraisemblable*. Following on from Van Mander, Lairese was the only northern theorist to devote a set of chapters to the representation of air and the sky, which played a part in harmonising the whole landscape (1712, p. 326), the harmony of colours and *chiaroscuro* (1712, p. 344), and, more generally, the manner of colouring a landscape (1712, p. 358) and light (1712, p. 364). However, his words were more oriented towards a conception of landscape that was attached to how that landscape was disposed, and the way the paintings themselves were disposed within galleries.

In England, many theorists, whilst recognising the Dutch origin of the word (*landskip*) gave considerable importance to landscapes. Peacham (1634, chap. XI, p. 42–43) was the first to treat the invention of a landscape from the point of view of judgment, which had to preside over the choice of motifs that played a part in the graces of the landscape.

#### *Observation and Practice*

But Peacham also touched on another aspect that featured in all theoretical writings in England and Germany, that of the practice of this genre. He thus specified how to paint a landscape: paint the horizon with a sky, clouds, the light of the sun, and then adjust the colours depending on the density of the air (1634, chap. XI, p. 39–40). This type of remark was also found in W. Sanderson's *Graphice* who devoted a very long passage to landscapes, and indicated how to position oneself, how to proceed, by dividing the canvas into three

parts, and how to represent things according to the distance, colours, proportions, light in relation to the position of the sun and the time of day. He also gave instructions on the manner of applying shade, using colours, and used as examples the works of Paul Bril. In the name of truth, which he considered to be an essential quality, he rejected the Dutch landscapes, produced not from precise observation of nature but from the imagination. No doubt it is necessary to see in this position, which gives a very particular role to an empirical approach to nature, the influence of Francis Bacon, from whom he in fact took certain passages. This approach, which privileged the observation of a landscape, was also that of other English authors, such as Salmon (*Polygraphice*, 1672, p. 33-36) and Browne (1675, p. 90-91), and could be read in an anonymous work, *An Excellency* (1688, p. 46-47, 89-90, 106-107, 120).

This landscape practice, based on observation of nature, was also that proposed by Leonardo Da Vinci, whose *Traitté* was published in 1651. Many passages talked about the question of distance (1651, chap. LXVIII, p. 19), the distance from the eyes (1651, chap. CCCXVII, p. 107), the representation of air and its impact on the different masses (1651, chap. XCIII, p. 46; chap. CCCIX-CCCXII, p. 104-106; chap. CCCXXVI, p. 110), the lighting of trees (1651, chap. XXXI-XXXII, p. 8; chap. CCCXXVII, p. 111), and the rendering of transparency, smoke and dust (1651, chap. CCCXXIX-CCCXXXI, p. 112-113). However, long before its publication, many painters had been made aware of his writings during their travels in Italy. Van Mander thus adopted a great number of the indications on how to treat atmospheric effects, how to render the horizon and point of view, without necessarily talking about aerial perspective like the Italian theorist. Nevertheless, as evidence of both the distance and adaptation between the text and the work, the landscapes that the Dutch theorist described and held up as models were different from those mentioned by Da Vinci, and were revealed in his paintings or in the landscapes that he cited (Pieter Bruegel l'Ancien (1525-1569), Gillis van Coninxloo (1544-1606), or that he painted himself (*Landscape with the Sermon of St John the Baptist*, 1597, Hanover, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum; or the *Continence of Scipio*, 1600, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum).

Similar preoccupations were important in Sandrart's chapter on landscape: the union of the different planes, the distribution of masses in the foreground, and the use of halftones. However, they produced a very different conception. The German theorist, rather than focusing

on the description of details, was more attached to diversity, the changing effects and impression of movement. The horizon was no longer defined as a separation at the level of the gaze, between the water and the sky as proposed by Van Mander, but on the contrary as a fusion of the elements with the infinite (1675, p. 70).

The processes also diverged. The allegoric presentation of the successive planes in the form of waves that intermingled as they diminished, and whose foam was used as the transition and passage from one plane to another produced by Van Mander, was rejected as much for its poetic form as for its basis (1604, chap. 8, v. 20). Instead of underlining the form of the planes that followed one another in space, Sandrart on the contrary tried to unite them and provide them with fluidity. Rejecting the background coloured with brown or purple, he insisted on progressive gradations and variations in intensity, on the use of broken colours and reflections which attenuated the separations and contrasts (1675, p. 71; 1679, p. 22). The aim was to give the impression of the fusion of the elements, and of a coloured unity.

When Sandrart took up Da Vinci's propositions for making use of the natural light of the sun and the air to paint (1651, chap. XXXI–XXXII, p. 8) or those concerning the conformity of colours with a natural landscape (1651, chap. CXXXIII, p. 43), he referred less to the models he proposed (Bril, Jan Both (1610–1652) or the landscape painters in Rome) than to his own experience of painting from nature in the Roman countryside accompanied by Claude Lorrain (1675, p. 71; 1679, p. 22). For Sandrart, the most important thing was not working in open air in order to make preparatory drawings, but rather to consider the colours that were necessary to either apply to the sketch or prepare directly in nature. The main question was to imprint not only the forms, but also the colours, that is, the truth (*Wahrheit*) in reason (*Verstand*) (1675, p. 71). Although it is difficult to measure the impact and reality of this practice, it is nevertheless true that this text revealed the preoccupations of the painters in Rome around 1630, and their interest in scientific and experimental research which was being carried out around Galileo and Matteo Zaccolini, and which most certainly lined up with the observations of phenomena practised in Holland, and which contributed to the creation of the tonal landscape. Although they were not mentioned directly by the Dutch theorists, they were nevertheless present indirectly in their writings, in the dispute between the painters François Knibbergen (1596–1674), Jan van Goyen (1596–1656) and Jan Porcellis (1583–1632) recounted by Hoogstraten



(1678, p. 237–238) or even more on the subject of light, *houding* and *reddering*.

The discourse on the practice of landscape painting was not absent from French theoretical writings either. La Fontaine mentioned the colours that were to be used (1679, p. 53–55, 87–88). And De Piles described in detail the practice of landscape painting, with the use of oil colours, presented as being the best, alongside the practice of ink wash, pastel and drawing (*Cours*, 1708, p. 247–248).

In France in the early 18th century, the question of landscape was raised again with regard to the relationship with the figure in the writings of Du Bos:

Even the most beautiful landscape, be it Titian or Carracci, does not interest us any more than would the sight of a terrible or joyous piece of countryside; there is nothing in this type of painting that holds us, so to speak, and as it barely touches us, it does not bind us much.

*(Le plus beau paysage, fut-il de Titien ou de Carrache ne nous intéresse pas plus que ne le ferait la vue d'un canton de pays affreux ou riant; il n'est rien dans un pareil tableau qui nous entretienne, pour ainsi dire, et comme il ne nous touche guère, il ne nous attache pas beaucoup.)*

(Du Bos, 1719 [1993], section 6, p. 18)

The landscape alone, even living and natural, can not bind us. The presence of the figures or an action is necessary for a landscape to touch us or bind us. In Diderot's descriptions of landscapes, it was also the intimate agreement between the scene represented and the landscape that provoked the empathy of the spectator.

Michèle-Caroline HECK

[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

## Sources

Aglionby, 1685; Alberti, 1485; Anonyme, 1668 [1688]; Bell, 1728; Beurs, 1692; Browne, 1669 [1675]; Da Vinci, 1651; De Hollanada, 1548 [1921]; De Lairese, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1708; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Félibien, 1668; Goeree, 1670 a, 1668 [1670 b], 1668 [1670 c]; Hoogstraten, 1678; La Fontaine, 1679; Lomazzo, 1584; Marsy, 1746; Peacham, 1634; Perrault, 1668; Pline l'Ancien; Preissler, 1759; Richardson, 1719; Salmon, 1672; Sanderson, 1658; Sandrart, 1675, 1679; Van Mander, 1604.

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Lay-man  $\implies$  Drapery, Studio

Liberal art  $\implies$  Art, Fine Arts, Artist, Painting

## LIBERTY

fr.: *liberté*  
 germ.: *Freiheit*  
 nl.: *frijheid*  
 it.: *licenza*  
 lat.: *licentia*

**Liberal art, licence, defect, fault, freedom, liberty, easiness, boldness**

*Although present little in French or English writings in the 17th century, the parallel between the liberty of the painter, and painting considered as “a noble and liberal art” (art noble et libéral) was developed at length by the German (Sandrart) or Dutch (Van Mander, Angel, Beurs) theorists, before reappearing in Watelet’s Encyclopédie méthodique, which also recalled that Alexander wanted only noble men to practise this art. By associating this quality of liberty with the practice of painting, Robin, the author of the article, did not mean to emphasise the nobility of the artist (a character that was most of the time attached to this anecdote), but rather highlight the freedom needed to express talent. Two meanings sometimes linked to each other defined the liberty of the artist: that of the mind and that of the hand.*

### Liberty, an Innate Quality in an Artist

The concept of liberty, often applied to the boldness or facility of the brushstroke, nevertheless played a role in the definition of the artist in the *Dictionnaires* by Félibien (1676), Marsy (1746) or Pernetty (1757). The idea of liberty used in reference to an innate quality of an artist effectively played a central role in the writings on art. It was based in part on the adage by Horace, *Pictoribus atque Poetis quidlibet audendi semper fuit aequa potestas* (Horace, *Art poétique*, v. 10, Painters and poets have always had an equal licence to dare), which was commonly found in the writings on art from the Renaissance on. This right to liberty thus first of all made it possible to justify the iconographic variants in a theme. But for the theorists of the 17th century, the debate no longer focused on the meaning or meanings to be given to history, but rather on the manner of treating the composition of the whole, the figures and the proportions (Pader, 1649, p. 3–4, Testelin, s.d. [1693–1694], p. 15, included in Le Comte, 1699–1700, p. 18–19).

Whether it contributed to defining the status of the artist as in the Renaissance, or to meaning the equality, or even the predominance, of painting in relation to poetry (De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 1*, p. 59–61, Testelin, s.d. [1693–1694], p. 21), the liberty of the painter was associated with his imagination, or even his genius. As the aim was not only to relate a story, and as it was not necessary to explain the narrative of it, the painter's choice was also freer than that of the historian (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 178). It was certainly necessary for the painter to choose what corresponded to his natural inclination (Goeree, 1670a, p. 9). But reason and experience were not excluded. On the contrary: they contributed to thinking of better circumstances, and to bringing them into a composition (Junius, III, 5, 8). It was effectively in the expression of the subject, through the choice of figures and the composition that was expressed what Goeree called the liberty of the artist (*Schilderkundige Vryheyd*, 1682, p. 78–79), just as it was exercised in the search for a pleasing effect on the spectator (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 178, Goeree, 1682, p. 78–79).

### Liberty and Licence

Licences were the liberties that painters could allow themselves. Originating in the genius of the artist, they could free him from the rules, even place the painter above them, if he knew how to use them ingeniously (De Piles, *Remarque 432*, 1668, p. 139, 1715, p. 54). In the name of the “liberty of genius” (*liberté des genies*) Testelin justified that the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture* had not “thought it necessary to establish precise rules, judging it more appropriate to give a few ideas of them to the students through examples” (*crû devoir établir des règles précises, jugeant plus à propos d’en donner quelque idée aux élèves par des exemples*, Testelin, s.d. [1693–1694], p. 27, included in Le Comte, 1699–1700, t. 1, p. 45). Although recognised and accepted, the liberty to invent or decorate nevertheless had its limits (De Lairese, 1712, p. 89–90), because it could lead to misguided ways (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 63). There were many principles that restricted the questions about its legitimacy. These questions touched on the representation of history which must not be distorted (Angel, 1642, p. 48–49), on the rejection of extravagance in the name of *vraisemblance* (De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 81*, p. 85, Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 6). Not shocking the eyes (Angel, 1642, p. 46–47), remaining faithful to the history (De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 81*, p. 85; 1708, p. 67–69), and to nature (Junius, I,

3, 12, Brown, 1675, p. 6–7, Sandrart, 1679, p. 17) were the precepts given by all the theorists. From the expression of liberty and genius, licence thus became a defect or a faulty. This meaning was retained in the dictionaries by Félibien “it is said of a painting that there is great licence against the perspective and the rules of art” (*on dit d’un tableau qu’il y a de grandes licences contre la perspective, & contre les règles de l’art*, 1676) and Pernety (1757).

### The Liberty of the Brush

The liberty of the brush, what Félibien also called the facility or boldness of the hand, also applied to the burin (1676), and apparently concerned more the execution. It was from this perspective that Félibien criticised Rubens (1577–1640) for his rapid and impetuous manner, a liberty that he attributed to practice, and which distanced him from correction (1685, *7<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 118–119).

The question of the possible and difficult reconciliation between liberty and correction, which was still identifiable in Marsy’s *Dictionnaire* (1746), was nevertheless replaced in the course of the 17th century with another discourse which tended to bring the liberty of the mind and that of the hand together. Sandrart thus devoted a long passage to freehand painting (*Freie Hand*) and associated the valour of the mind, the quality of the reasoning and the hand (Sandrart, 1675, p. 66). Other theorists placed themselves in the same position. The brush was able to acquire the qualities of the mind, that is, liberty and what was natural (Richardson, 1719, p. 193). It was also from intelligence that was developed the rendering of the colours or *chiaroscuro*, as well as liberty, the only thing capable of creating artifice (De Piles, 1708, p. 192–193). Dupuy du Grez thus opposed painters “who sought through their brushes rather than with their intelligence” (*qui cherchent avec leur pinceau, plutôt que par leur intelligence*), and he compared the works of the former to those whose quality was liberty in the brushstrokes (1699, p. 200). Similarly, Testelin, repeated by Le Comte, associated the liberty of the brushstroke with the talent of the painter (s.d. [1693–1694], p. 39, Le Comte, 1699–1700, p. 70–71).

In the name of liberty, the great painters “played with their brushes” (*jouent de leur pinceau*), to use the expression of Batteux. In this way, the symmetry, ornament or other types of disorder, instead of rendering the painting faulty, contributed on the contrary to rendering it pleasant for the spirit, and to bringing it closer to the nature of which it was

the imitation. By means of this argument, which he included in a much broader reflection on the notion of imitation, Batteux reconciled these two, seemingly contradictory, reflections: the exactitude of the finished, ideal painting, and liberty, which had the ability to bring to life the model and remove “all the marks of servitude” (*toutes les marques de servitude*) which were habitually attached to it (Batteux, 1746, p. 88).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Angel, 1642; Batteux, 1746; Beurs, 1692; Browne, 1669 [1675]; De Lairesse, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1668; De Piles, 1708; De Piles, 1715; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Félibien, 1666–1688; Félibien, 1676; Goeree, 1670 a; Goeree, 1682; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Horace, *Épître aux Pisons*, dit *l'Art poétique*; Le Comte, 1699–1700; Marsy, 1746; Pader, 1649; Pernety, 1757; Richardson, 1719; Sandrart, 1675 et 1679; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Van Mander, 1604; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1791.

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| <p>Licence <math>\Rightarrow</math> Caprice, Liberty<br/>Life <math>\Rightarrow</math> Natural/Naturalness</p> |
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## LIGHT

fr.: *lumière*  
 germ.: *Licht*  
 nl.: *licht*  
 it.: *luce, lume*  
 lat.: *lux, lumen*

**Illumination, lighting, light source, universal light, sunlight, artificial light, candle light, cast shadow, penumbra**

*Light was a topic of art theory with many facets: empirical and epistemological approaches combined with optical sciences were as relevant as aesthetic and compositional aspects of the distribution of light in pictorial works. Religious associations were often, if at times an underlying, part of the discourse on light in art theory. Light was discussed in geometrical terms, considering its effect on shadow projection and the interaction of reflected light. Writers on art distinguished natural and artificial light sources, and in natural lighting, sunlight and lumière universelle, lighting compared to diffuse daylight on a cloudy day. The progress made in optical science in the Enlightenment was generally reflected in the literature on art theory: questions of the nature of light, light effects and light as a subject of art were increasingly treated as separate aspects.*

### Light as a Topic of Art Theory

Light has been part of discussions on art since Antiquity. In early modern times, theoretical questions on the nature and appearance of light ranged from analysis of its essence to problems of pictorial composition, the latter of which grew into a separate discussion of *chiaroscuro*. Metaphysical approaches to light in the 14th and 15th century were based on ancient and mediaeval knowledge of optics: the writings by Aristotle, Alhazen, Witelo and John Peaccham were among the most influential. Neoplatonic thought distinguished between *lux* and *lumen*: light as it is intrinsically in the light-producing body of the light source, and radiating or reflected light that derives from it. The effects of light were seen as dependent on its function and nature. Leonardo da Vinci discussed categories of light, regarding a light source and its effects on the appearance of light as determining factors. The categories *lume particolare*, sharp-edged, focused light as caused by the

sun, the moon or artificial light sources, and *lume universale*, daylight caused by reflections of sunlight on the clouds, were influential for discussion of light in art theory (Vinci, 1651, ch. CXLVI, p. 11–12).

The most extensive and multifaceted discussions of light were produced around 1600. Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo regarded light in emanationist terms as an deflection of divinity, enlightening human beings. Different sorts of light were characterized as primary and secondary in accordance with their origin and intensity, an idea disseminated both in Italy and the north (Haydocke, 1598, p. 135–172). In the Netherlands, Karel van Mander devoted sixty-one stanzas of his didactic poem *Den Grondt der edel fry Schilder-konst* to aspects of the essence and effects of light, beginning in neoplatonic fashion with the forms and appearances of sunlight in nature, and ending with the reflections of images in mirroring surfaces. The images caused by light, be they projected shadows or mirror reflections, were compared to the capacity of pictorial art to deceive the beholder with illusions. Considering the popularity of the effects of artificial light in Dutch art in the 17th century, it is noticeable that already in 1604 Van Mander remarked that candle light was not commonly rendered as lighting in paintings (Mander, 1604, fol. 31v). The popularity of artificial light north of the Alps began in the second decade of the 17th century with the return of painters who were inspired by light effects in the style of Caravaggio.

### Optical and Geometrical Aspects of Light

The 17th century was an age of great progress in the exploration of optical phenomena, a fact that was acknowledged in the discussions of lighting in art theory. Nevertheless, many of the topical discussions and new discoveries in this field were not included in art theory or if they were, only rather superficially. With the theories of Johannes Kepler, René Descartes, Christiaan Huygens and Isaac Newton, optics developed from a geometrical science of vision to a mathematical science of light. The authors of art theory, while aware of the fact that achievements had been made in the field, could hardly reflect the impact of new optical knowledge in their writings. Natural philosophy was included in discussions of lighting in art theory, but emphasis was put on questions of practicality for artists and aesthetic value. Samuel van Hoogstraten, for instance, pointed out repeatedly that he



would limit the discussion to light effects that were useful for artists (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 257, 262).

The aspects of light that were relevant issues in art theory were the distinction between the different kinds of light according to their sources, the impact of the light source on the size, darkness and appearance of cast and attached shadows, and the impact of light on the appearance of colours. Artists were encouraged to use *lumière universelle* (in Dutch *gemeen licht*) for pictorial illumination, a lighting patterned on diffuse daylight. Advice to painters to choose studios with north-facing windows, or to apply oiled paper to the window pane to diffuse direct light, was given by Leonardo da Vinci, from where it was cited in 17th century writings on art (Vinci, 1651, ch. XXVII, p. 7; Goeree, 1697 [1670b], p. 63; Mérot, 1996, p. 352, and Félibien, 1705, p. 27). Before the 19th century, however, daylight was never rendered as ambient light as we can observe it in nature (Richter, 1817, p. 1). Although contrasts between light and shade were blurred and mellowed, and cast shadows were painted as petering out in a penumbra, early modern painters kept directing their lights.

### Different Sorts of Light

Different sorts of light were distinguished depending on the source of the light (Félibien, 1705, p. 26–27). The effects of *lumière universelle* were discussed in opposition to sunlight, direct light causing bright colours and well-defined shadow projections (in Dutch *vlak schaduwen*). The comparison was made by Leonardo, but it was extended considerably in the discourse on art theory in the 17th century. Gerard de Lairesse argued that *lumière universelle* and sunlight could be rendered in the same painting, if the painter adhered to the observation that the shadows differ in the sharp-edgedness of the outline but not in colour and intensity (Lairesse, 1740, I, p. 284–286). Daylight falling in through a window (*kamerlicht*) was regarded as another form of natural light (Lairesse, 1740, I, p. 249), moonlight as a form of night light (*nachtlicht*) (Lairesse, 1740, I, p. 306–310). The sources of artificial light such as fire, candles, torches and lanterns were seen as another category of night light (Lairesse, 1740, I, p. 311–315). The list of the features by which the different sorts of light could be distinguished was consistent. One of the constant issues was the impact of the colour of light, which could be either the clearness of sunlight, which results in bright, and the least distorted colours, or the yellow hue of artificial

light. The opposite point was the appearance, colour, size and shape of the shadows. By the late 17th century, the impact and effects of reflections on the intensity and colour of shadows became increasingly relevant (Lairesse, 1740, I, p. 262–264; Gautier d'Agoty 1753, p. 57; Cochin, 1753, p. 193–198).

### Divergence of Scientific Knowledge and Symbolic Use of Light

The observation that light travels in waves was made in the 17th century, but the importance of this discovery was only recognised in the 19th century. In the 18th century, the effects of light were investigated in scientific terms to explain the interactions between reflected light, as well as to define the area of the penumbra. A separation of different sorts of light according to their source became less relevant than an understanding of the effects and reactions in optical sciences. In the theoretical writings on art, awareness of weak and secondary light in shadows was used to support an argument in favour of a bright style (*helder wyze*) with even lighting and clear colours (Houbraken, 1753, II, p. 20–21). The optical aspects of lighting were accompanied by discussions of symbolic or at least meaningful uses of light in depictions of narratives in history paintings. A significant, and also an unprecedented topic in art theory in the late 17th century was the attribution by Sébastien Bourdon of artistic subjects to different times of day, using as examples the paintings by Poussin (Mérot, 1996, p. 169–180). The comparisons between lighting and narrative were adapted and generalised by Lairesse (Lairesse, 1740, I, p. 334–336). A classification of different sorts of light could continue in symbolic approaches to light in art.

Ulrike KERN

### Sources

Cochin, 1753; Da Vinci, 1651; De Lairesse, 1707 [1712 et 1740]; Félibien, 1666–1688 [1705]; Gautier D'Agoty, 1753; Goeree, 1668 [1670b]; Hoogstraten, 1678; Houbraken, 1718–1721 [1753]; Lomazzo, 1584 [Haydocke, 1598]; Richter, 1817; Van Mander, 1604.

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Likelihood  $\implies$  Proportion

**LOVER OF ART/CONNOISSEUR**



# M

Magnificence  $\implies$  Sublime

## MANNER

fr.: *manière*  
germ.: *Manier*  
nl.: *manier*  
it.: *maniera*  
lat.: *maniera*

**Mannerist, genius, taste, imitation, great manner, good manner, connoisseur, style, handling, practice, hand, school**

*Use of the term manner was extremely widespread, found in the theoretical, practical and critical aspects of artistic vocabulary. Used since the 14th century in Italy, it was Giorgio Vasari who durably defined the main meaning by defining it as the recognisable character of an individual or collective artistic entity. Manner also meant technique before this word was adopted in the 19th century to refer to artistic techniques. The considerable polysemy of this term was a determining factor in an evolution that was complex, rich in semantic shifts, and marked by an increasingly pejorative connotation which resulted in the appearance of two derivatives after 1660. The term style, which was already considered as being the equivalent of manner by Hilaire Pader, and was occasionally used as a synonym, progressively replaced it from the second half of the 18th century.*

## The Origin of the Diversity of Manners

The diversity of manners was one of the most common preoccupations for theorists in the 17th century, who questioned the origins of this phenomenon, observing that when faced with the same object, artists produced noticeably different representations. Ideally, according to Abraham Bosse, there should only be one, single manner, “just one, which would be that of what is Natural” (*une seule qui seroit celle du Naturel*, 1649, p. 39). Faced with this *topos*, the scholar Franciscus Junius contented himself with citing the famous passage from Cicero, “*Una fingendi est ars . . .*” to justify not only the legitimacy, but also the great interest in this variety (1641, p. 38).

The authors of the previous century frequently attributed the characteristics of an artist’s temperament and manner to the influence of the stars, while wondering to what extent they could be acquired or were perfectible thanks to the teachings of the principles of art. This theme, which was crucial given the educational project that was being developed, found additional developments in the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, combining the theory of climates, and the notion of taste which was starting to emerge. Henri Testelin linked the elements associated with the genesis of manners through the principle of causality: “everyone sees nature in different ways depending on how their organs are disposed and their temperament, which is what forms the diversity of tastes and the difference in manners” (*chacun voit la nature de différentes façons selon la disposition des organes & du temperament, ce qui fait la diversité des goûts & la difference des manieres*, (s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 40). Following the same logic, according to Félibien, “a particular taste” (*un goust particulier*) led to adopting “a particular manner” (*une manière particulière*, 1679, *5<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 15–16; 1688, *9<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 40). Although often used as interchangeable synonyms, a distinction was established between taste and manner: the former belonged to the artist’s mental and conceptual side, oriented by his temperament and conditioned by the cultural environment; the latter was the actual result, the materialisation of this taste, observable in the work once completed.

It was by approaching this question from a more aesthetic, more global perspective that the idea of climatological determinism came into play. Henri Testelin and Gérard Audran saw the diversity of manners as a consequence of the impossibility of agreeing on the definition of beauty, which varied considerably from one country to

another (Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 40; Audran, 1683, Préface, n.p.). This aspect of the discourse, which led to a sort of cartography of manners, played a considerable role in the evolution of the notion of school.

Roger De Piles added a further complication to the dilemma of diversity, insisting on the variability of manner in the course of the artist's lifetime. He thus established the theory of three manners ("three times" (*trois temps*) for Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1752, I, p. XXXI), which was clearly exposed in his "Idée du peintre parfait" (1715, p. 93–94), by adapting the three-way diagram for the ages of man from the Aristotelian conception (Boileau, *Art poétique*, III, 373–390), thus considering the second manner, that of maturity, as the acme of creation and artistic production.

### Describing, Defining and "Knowing the Manners"

From diversity flowed a whole range of adjectives associated with manner, in the wake of the model imposed by Vasari, used in descriptions, but also aiming to distinguish the good from the bad, and capable of wavering between praise and reprimand. Beyond their essential descriptive and analytical value, these epithets had a first line function in the creation of categories for classifying the works and masters of the past. The most exemplary case was without doubt that of the "four sorts of different manners" (*quatre sortes de manieres differentes*) noticed in sculptors by Gaspard Marsy in his conference in 1669 and collected with a certain success (Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 16–17; Le Comte, 1699, p. 20–22; De Lairese, 1701, p. 55; Lacombe, 1752, p. 383).

In parallel, certain epithets were at the origin of new precepts, aesthetic criteria and genres of painting, through which it was a question of promoting and orienting contemporary production. One of the most notable was the *great manner* (*grande manière*, or *great taste*, which was the heir to the *maniera magnifica* defined by Nicolas Poussin (Bellori, 1672, p. 461), defended by Abraham Bosse and Fréart de Chambray (Bosse, 1649, *Definitions . . .*, n.p.; Fréart de Chambray, 1662, p. 72), and which was also a determining factor for Félibien, particularly in his comments on the works of Poussin (1594–1665) and Lebrun (1619–1690). It tended to coincide with the painting of history, which occupied a hegemonic position in the academic context, abolishing details in the search for the grandiose effect.

For the Flemish, Carel Van Mander determined *Tweederley/doch welstandighe manieren* (two different, but also seemly manners) which corresponded to the clear and precise manner of the northern school, in opposition with the broad, rough manner practised by the Venetians (1604, XII, 23–28, fol. 48r–48v). Although Van Mander recommended following the former, Sandrart on the other hand defended a *gute Manier* (good manner), which went beyond this dualism and accepted them both, in a form of complementarity made possible by advocating the notions of *Geist* (spirit) and *Tapferkeit* (bravery).

With the rise of the art market and collecting, art lovers could not fail to appreciate such diversity, forming in itself a new source of agreement, which furthermore was very useful for fuelling conversations on art. According to Félibien, “It is a kind of pleasure to know the names of Painters, to know their different manners” (*C’est une espece de plaisir de sçavoir les noms des Peintres, de connoistre leurs differentes manières*, 1688, *10<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 293–294). “Knowing the Manners” (*Connoistre les Manières*) soon became one of the most commonly-used expressions containing the term “manner” (De Piles, 1668, *Glossaire*, n.p.). Helping art lovers, non-practitioners and potential purchasers to recognise manners imposed itself as one of the main objectives of Abraham Bosse. In England, by exposing the qualities of the perfect connoisseur, Richardson often preferred the synonym *hand* over the translation “manner” of the French “*manière*” in his reflections on the *Knowledge of the Hands*.

The artist theorists however started very quickly to take up a position against the attribution as practised by connoisseurs. Although providing training for those who were called curious, Abraham Bosse nevertheless thought that it was the art practitioners who remained “the most qualified to when it comes to discerning all these different manners”, (*les plus entendus à discerner toutes ces diverses manières*, 1649, p. 71), the question naturally being to defend the status of the artist which was undergoing profound change. Similarly, according to Félibien, the attribution represented only an initial and incomplete approach to art (1688, *10<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 293–294), and the connoisseurs of manners were nevertheless not necessarily learned or capable of understanding and judging works (1676, p. 646). Roger De Piles even warned that in the case of certain paintings, it would be “reckless to want to assure the name of their Author” (*une témérité de vouloir assurer du nom de leur Auteur*), an exercise that was prone to uncertainty given the variability in the manner of a single artist (1677, p. 5; 1715,

p. 93–94). Charles-Antoine Coypel also denounced the drift towards a form of attributionism that was practised by “a large number of so-called connoisseurs” (*quantité de prétendus connoisseurs*), who stubbornly persisted in “studying the different manners” being attached solely to the artist’s name (1732, p. 22). The material and economic aspect of this type of expertise foreign to the deeper approach of the stylistic analysis mentioned by Félibien was certainly a non-negligible factor in the depreciation of the term manner.

### The Manner as a Habit

The most significant element associated with the meaning of manner was that of habit, already present in the first academic conference given by Sébastien Bourdon in 1669. This was the key word that stood out in the definition proposed by Félibien: this habit concerned all parts of art, “either in the Disposition, or the Drawing, or in the Colouring” (*soit dans la Disposition, soit dans le Dessein, soit dans le Coloris*, 1676, p. 646). Roger De Piles specified that it could be identified “not only in the handling of the brush, but even in the three main parts of Painting, Invention, Drawing and Colouring” (*non seulement dans le maniement du pinceau, mais encore dans les trois principales parties de la Peinture, Invention, Dessein & Coloris*), including thus the painter’s practice (1668, Glossaire, n.p.). This same junction between practice and theory, between the hand and the mind, could be identified in the treatise by William Aglionby, in which *Manner* corresponded to *the Habit of a Painter, not only of his Hand, but of his Mind* (1685, *An Explanation . . .*, n.p.).

It was nevertheless generally in the practical sphere that the term of *manner* was used in Dutch writings, indicating a very marked interest in the teaching of artistic techniques already evident in the 16th century (Vasari, 1568, *Terza parte*, II, p. 861). For this reason, *manier* was often a close synonym for *handeling* (dexterity). Samuel Van Hoogstraten, despite being aware of the concepts that were circulating (for example, he used *grootse maniere*, 1678, p. 287), similarly privileged a use of the word *manier* without any particular theoretical development, by framing it in an apology of the doing (*het doen*) and showing no interest in critical ambitions. From the same perspective, in France, Charles-Nicolas Cochin proposed from the 1770s, without great success, replacing manner by the word doing.



When he referred to a single painter, Félibien only used the term manner in the singular in his dictionary in 1676. He nevertheless changed his mind quite quickly, above all to defend Nicolas Poussin in the *Huitième entretien* which was published in 1685, and the objective of which was to show how the artist had been able to vary the expressive register, going from the “tender and agreeable manner” (*manière tendre et agreeable*) to the “grand manner” (*grande manière*), and to distinguish himself in different manners, appropriating as much Venetian colouring as Roman drawing. The author reacted in this way to the words of Roger De Piles, who had described the genius of Rubens (1570–1640), without habit, capable of a surprising diversity of manners and constant renewal in order to adapt to all subjects (De Piles, 1677, p. 265).

Conceiving manner as a habit effectively represented one of the most symptomatic indications of its almost irremediable condemnation at the theoretical level. From a moral point of view, good and bad habits, involving the repetition of an action, corresponded to the virtues and vices. The adjective mannered appeared in this context and took on the meanings implied by “bad habit”. Like Dolce and Bellori, De Piles on the contrary made manner coincide with “bad habit”, considering it as the primary meaning of the term (1708, p. 40; 1715, p. 93–94). In his conference in 1747, the Count of Caylus also retained the idea that the manner was only a defect, that is, “the habit of always seeing things in the same way” (*l’habitude de voir toujours de la même façon*, in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I, vol 1, p. 61). No real terminological solution was found given the devaluation of the word, abandoned in all its ambiguity, that the notice by Marsy, which was full of contradictions, summarised perfectly (1746, I, p. 369–371).

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Aglionby, 1685; Audran, 1683; Bellori, 1672; Boileau, 1674 b; Bosse, 1649; Conférences, [2006–2015]; Coypel, 1732; De Piles, 1668, 1677, 1707 [1715], 1708; De Lairese, 1701; Dezallier d’Argenville, 1745–1752; Dolce, 1557; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Lacombe, 1752; Le Comte, 1699–1700; Marsy, 1746; Pader, 1653 [1657]; Richardson, 1719; Sandrart, 1675 and 1679; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Van Mander, 1604; Vasari, 1550/1568.

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## MANNERIST/MANNERED

fr.: *maniéré, maniériste*  
 germ.: *manierlich*  
 nl.: *gemaakt*  
 it.: *ammanierato (manierato)*

### **Manner, imitation of nature, imitation of masters, affected**

*Two derivatives of manner, maniériste (mannerist) and maniéré (mannered), appeared in the written language of art in France from the 1670s onwards, both with a clearly pejorative connotation. Mannerist was created by suffixation in the sense of a mannered artist and mannered was used as a mean of designating any work in which one could distinguish an excessive distance from the model of nature or Antiquity.*

### The Diffusion of the Derivatives of Manner

In the history of the word *manner*, it was commonly admitted that the emphatic condemnation by the Abbé Bellori in 1672 was a decisive moment. French theory and art criticism nevertheless played a fundamental role in the fight against manner. Anticipating the Italian author by a decade, the invention of the noun *maniériste* attributed to Fréart de Chambray was an equally milestone within this terminological evolution (1662, p. 120). The use of this term nevertheless remained rather sporadic. Abraham Bosse used it a little later in *Le Peintre converty*, as did Roger De Piles in *L'Art de Peinture*. The first of these two uses was particularly significant, for, despite a rather confused, not to say paradoxical, explanation, Bosse used an adjectival form in the expression “fall into Mannerist practice” (*tomber dans une pratique Maniériste*, 1667, p. 36), instead of “fall into a manner” (*tomber dans la manière*) which was to become more common afterwards, and this, probably so as to avoid having to attribute a fundamentally negative value to the notion of manner.

André Félibien preferred to introduce the use of a derivative more adapted to critical discourse, the adjective *maniéré* (“mannered”), which could be applied occasionally to the comments or one or more parts of the art, without necessarily referring to the whole work of the artist: in the case of drawing in Rosso Fiorentino (1495–1540), “his Figures are, to use the terms of Art, mannered, and are not natural”

(*ses Figures sont, pour user des termes de l'Art, maniérées, & ne sont pas naturelles*, 1672, 3<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 109). Filippo Baldinucci introduced the new adjective *ammanierato* in the article *maniera* with the same basic meaning, but from a more censorial perspective by adding the idea of vice borrowed from Bellori (1681, p. 88).

There are few occasions, on the other hand, in which *maniériste* is mentioned in the dictionaries. Antoine Furetière, who formulated his notice from the observations of Fréart de Chambray, preferred to retain only *maniéré*. It was present in Marsy's *Dictionnaire abrégé*, as well as in that of Pernety, although the latter defined the *mannered painter* (*peintre maniéré*), specifying that "Some give to these poor Artists the name of Mannerist; but this term is not of good use" (*Quelques-uns donnent à ces mauvais Artistes le nom de Maniéristes; mais ce terme n'est pas du bon usage*, 1757, p. 402). Probably too insulting at the beginning, the word came to be diffused more widely following the invention of that of *maniérisme* (mannerism) at the end of the 18th century. It should be noted that in England, in his constructive reflections on *Connoisseurship*, Richardson, who was well informed on the theoretical debates in France, used *Mannerist* to designate a category of artists, in a way opposed to the masters, in all probability the same as that criticised by Fréart de Chambray, a category of artists whose it was easily possible to distinguish copies from originals (1719, *Part. II*, p. 135).

### Distinction Between Having a Manner and Being Mannered

In the face of the semantic disorder that occurred around the term *manner*, the result of the different positions of the theorists on the question of the models to imitate, fluctuating between two conceptions of art, between truth and ideal, Dezallier d'Argenville tried to emphasise a clearer distinction between "having a manner" (*avoir une manière*) and "being mannered" (*être maniéré*). These two expressions were effectively generally marked by almost inextricable synonymy: "The most skilful painters have their manner, nevertheless without being mannered" (*Les plus habiles peintres ont leur manière, sans néanmoins êtres maniérés*, 1745–1752, I, p. XX) he thus suggested. The word *manner* was extremely useful in the classification system for works of art that he developed in the image of those developed in natural sciences and had, in his opinion, to remain strangers to the world of aesthetic judgment. By reflecting on the practice of attribution, he

affirmed that manner “is how a painter paints, it is his style” (*c’est le faire d’un peintre, c’est son style*) and that “this type of picturesque writing can always be recognised by a few particular traits” (*ce genre d’écriture pictoresque se reconnoît toujours par quelques traits particuliers*, 1745–1752, I, p. XX and XXVI).

On the contrary, under the idea of *being mannered* (*être maniéré*) lay a condensation of all the negative aspects suggested by the term *manner*, often intermingled conceptually. The first constant critical element was the subject of a long tradition of debates: imitating the masters. Although recommended by some in the context of apprenticeship, and using the metaphor of foraging bees, comparable with Vasari’s notion of “fine manner” (*bella maniera*, de Champaigne 1672 cited in Lichtenstein and Michel, t. I, vol. 2, p. 461–463; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 11; La Fontaine, 1679, p. 27–29), it was questioned by most, and not only in France (Angel, 1642, p. 53–54). “Be original in your own way” (*Soyez l’original de votre manière*) said Dezallier d’Argenville on this subject (1745–1752, I, p. XX) and, in the wake of the famous aphorism by Leonardo Da Vinci, Noël Coypel called the mannered artists the “bastards of nature” (*bâtards de la nature*, 1697 cited in Lichtenstein and Michel, t. II, vol. 2, p. 593).

Another essential element of *mannered* already announced by Lodovico Dolce was repetition, contrary to the principle of *varietas*. This defect, latent in the idea of habit (see *Manière*), was emphasised in particular by Roger De Piles, who made of imitation of oneself, through laziness or lack of genius, the characteristic of the “third manner” (*troisième manière*). With Du Bos, repetition of oneself became larceny, a fraud perpetrated by “Artisans without genius” (*Artisans sans genie*), the victims of which were ultimately the public and collectors (1740, *Seconde partie*, p. 64).

Finally, the most distinctive element in the meaning of *mannered* remained that of excessive distance from the model of nature, to which was added the models from Antiquity in the periods of classical rigour. For the Count of Caylus, the manner of the painter was to be considered as an obstacle to the contemplation of nature (1747, in: Lichtenstein and Michel, t. V, vol. 1, p. 61–62). Excess, and a lack of simplicity were often cited in the texts, where the adjective affected appeared as a synonym for mannered. In the letters by Baillet de Saint-Julien, affectation was perceived as the original sin in painting (1750, p. 12–13). This aspect of *mannered* was diffused in the languages of the north through this synonym: Gerard De Lairese actually used

the terms *geaffekteert* (affected), or *gezoght* (contrived), to criticise any exaggerations at the level of the outlines, colours, proportions or anatomy of the figures (1701, p. 65; 1712, I, p. 242; II, p. 250–251).

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### Sources

Angel, 1642; Baillet De Saint-Julien, 1750; Baldinucci, 1681; Bellori, 1672; Bosse, 1667; Conférences, [2006-2015]; De Lairese, 1701, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1668; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1752; Dolce, 1557; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Félibien, 1666–1688; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Furetière, 1690; La Fontaine, 1679; Marsy, 1746; Pernety, 1757; Richardson, 1719; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694].

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Marvel  $\Rightarrow$  Sublime

Mass  $\Rightarrow$  Ground, *Houding*, *Réveillon*

Master  $\Rightarrow$  School

## MASTERPIECE

fr.: *chef-d'œuvre*  
 germ.: *Meisterwerk, Meisterstück*  
 nl.: *meesterstuk*  
 it.: *capolavoro*

### Art, artist, beauty, Fine-Arts, perfection

*The word masterpiece does not figure in many of the most important art dictionaries until the mid-nineteenth century, and is thus absent from Pernety (1757), Lacombe (1753), Sulzer (1771), the Encyclopédie méthodique (1788) and even Millin (1806). Nonetheless, most of these reference works contain at least one if not more entries in which the word is employed. The word masterpiece is one of the terms—alongside art and fine arts—which proves highly important for us in our attempts to trace the shifting boundaries between the mechanical arts and the fine arts during the Early Modern and the Enlightenment periods. Originally used in the crafts and mechanical arts to refer to a test-piece, it then came to signify an artist's greatest or exemplary work and then an outstanding work of art.*

### One Word, Several Meanings

The word has a lengthy ancestry in English, Dutch, German or French, first attested during the High Middle Ages. The masterpiece (*meesterstuk* or *proefstuc*, *Meisterstück*, *chef-d'œuvre*) was the work or object submitted by a journeyman aspiring to admission into a guild and enabling him to attain the rank of master. Requirements and procedures varied from one country to another and from one trade to another. As a result, some painters' and sculptors' associations required test-pieces, others did not. The meaning of the word evolved little over the following centuries; Jean Nicot (1606) defines the *chef-d'œuvre* as "Canon artis", indicating thereby conformity to the rules (by reference to the canon of Polykleitos) of an art or trade (*ars* ou *techne*). The lexicographic tradition privileged this association of the word with the mechanical arts throughout the early modern and enlightenment periods (*Le Dictionnaire de l'Académie française dédié au Roy* (1694); Chambers (1728); *Nouveau Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* (1718); *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (1740, 1762, 1798); in these large lexicographical enterprises, the word's original mean-

ing almost invariably precedes the extended sense, namely a perfect work, a work of very great skill in the arts. The *Encyclopédie* (1751) unsurprisingly omits the extended sense and refers only to the original meaning drawn from the mechanical arts and the trades. In the light of this, it is notable that the specialised art dictionaries do not include an entry for the word, although it appears often in entries in these same works. Thus, towards the end of the eighteenth century, Watelet and Levesque (1788–1791) do not offer an entry “chef-d’œuvre” in the *Encyclopédie méthodique. Beaux-arts*, and nor is there an entry for the term in the adapted text published as their *Dictionnaire* (1791). It is not to be found in the earlier dictionaries published by Marsy (1746), Lacombe (1753) or Pernety (1757). Likewise, Sulzer does not include the term *Meisterwerk* or *Meisterstück* in his *Allgemeine Theorie* (1771). The Italian guilds seem to have used the word “prove” to refer to the masterpieces, and the words “*capodopera*” or, more frequently, “*capolavoro*” are attested only from the eighteenth century, apparently modelled on the French “*chef-d’œuvre*” in the extended sense. It is not found at all in Baldinucci’s *Vocabolario* (1681).

### The Masterpiece as an Outstanding Work

It would be incorrect to speak of a significant shift in the meaning of the word, or of one linguistic paradigm replacing another. In fact, the two (or three) meanings are closely connected and seem to coexist for centuries. The use of the word to designate a work or an object of outstanding merit either in architecture or in reference to the natural world as opposed to a test piece is attested, albeit uncommon, in French texts during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

In the English speaking world, the word is used widely in texts after the mid-seventeenth century to refer to a work of outstanding skill or beauty (although generally not for buildings or architecture). Sander-son (1658) states that Van Dyck’s portrait of his wife is a masterpiece, and in his English translation of Fréart’s *Idea* (1668), John Evelyn employs the word masterpiece to render the French chef-d’œuvre (in the 1662 French edition) when describing Michelangelo’s *Last Judgement* (1536–1541, Vatican, Sixtine Chapel). William Aglionby (1685) speaks of a masterpiece when referring to Leonardo’s *Last Supper* (1495–1498, Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan) and the paintings of Perino del Vaga (1501–1547) in the Palazzo Doria at Genoa, while William Acton (1691) describes the Farnese *Bull* as a masterpiece. But



the word masterpiece is not found only in texts on art: it can also designate literary works (masterpiece of Aristotle, Balzac's masterpiece), natural objects (masterpiece of nature), the theory of medicine (masterpiece of skill, Blochwitz (1677)), a peace treaty (masterpiece) and even reprehensible acts (masterpiece of villainy, Allington (1654)).

The foundation of the *Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture* in 1648, accompanied by an attempt to distance artists from the corporation des peintres, doreurs, sculpteurs et vitriers, could have fostered a change in the meaning of the word. The Académie, like the corporations, required a test piece; it was decided that this should be called a *morceau de réception* and not a masterpiece. The confusion was, however, not immediately put to rest. Germain Brice (1684) is clearly harking back to the masterpieces in the corporations when he speaks of the chefs d'œuvre housed in the Académie's premises in the Palais Brion. The Académie de Saint Luc, on the other hand, retained the use of the term *chef-d'œuvre* to indicate the works submitted by an artist for admission to the company's ranks (*Nouveaux règlements*, 1738). Theoretical and historical texts on the arts tended to adopt the new meanings, and employ the word to mean both a work of great merit, of considerable perfection and the greatest work of an artist, and occasionally to employ both meanings within the same text. Perrault speaks of the *chef-d'œuvre* of Le Brun (1688) and De Piles praises Raphael's *chef-d'œuvre* (1699). Batteux (1746) and Du Bos (1740) use the word to refer to a work of great or exceptional merit and skill. Others use the word less consistently. Thus Descamps (1753), Dézallier d'Argenville (1762), Monville (1730) and Félibien in his *Entretiens* (1666–1688) use the word to identify both a very great work and an artist's greatest work.

In the German tradition, the words *Meisterstück* or *Meisterwerk* (less common) were used throughout the Early Modern period to refer to a test-piece for admission to a guild or corporation. In parallel, probably by reference to the French *chef-d'œuvre*, the words began to feature in the artistic literature, albeit sporadically, to mean an excellent work or the best work of an artist. Sandrart (1675) seems to be using the word in its extended artistic sense (excellent work) when referring to works by named artists. In the third book (*On Painting*), however, he employs the word to refer to the techniques of art; here, in passages on proportions and on landscape painting, he employs the word in a sense that seems to correspond more closely to the earlier understanding of the masterpiece as the work that exhibits technical mastery. A third

word, almost exactly synonymous, was also used from time to time in German literature (more especially during the eighteenth century), namely *Hauptwerk*. Junius, writing some forty years before Sandrart in Dutch, was undoubtedly also close to the earlier artisanal tradition when he used the word “*meesterstuk*” (1641), which is a translation of “*exactae artis opus*” in the Latin edition (1637) and by an “absolute piece of workmanship” in the English edition (1638).

Cecilia HURLEY

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Acton, 1691; Aglionby, 1685; Allington, 1654; Balducci, 1681; Bateux, 1746; Blochwitz, 1677; Brice, 1684; Chambers, 1728; De Piles, 1699; Descamps, 1753; Dezallier d’Argenville, 1745–1752; Dictionnaire, 1694; Diderot, D’Alembert, 1751–1780; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Félibien, 1666–1688; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Lacombe, 1752; Marsy, 1746; Millin, 1806; Monville, 1730; Nicot, 1606; Pernet, 1757; Perrault, 1688–1697; Sanderson, 1658; Sandrart, 1675, 1679; Sulzer, 1771–1774; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1791.

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Mechanical art  $\implies$  Art, Artist, Fine arts

Mellowness  $\implies$  Caricature

Memory  $\implies$  Idea, Imagination

Measure  $\implies$  Proportion  
 Method  $\implies$  Practice, Rule

## MIND/SPIRIT

fr.: *esprit*  
 germ.: *Geist, Verstand, Vernunft*  
 nl.: *geest, gemoed*  
 it.: *mente, ingegno*  
 lat.: *mens*

### Wit, rational soul, reason, thought, genius

*Whether it is defined as a natural disposition, common to all individuals, or a sign of election specific to exceptional beings, the mind is the faculty that allows artists to organise the material of their paintings, but also to communicate it to their spectators.*

### The Painter's Mind

As painting is a liberal art, it is also an art of the mind. It supposes of its practitioners that they be imbued with natural dispositions. These dispositions can be judged in a normative manner, so in this case, the word “mind” describes a quality. Thus, for Lodovico Dolce, “Leonardo da Vinci was equal in all respects to Michelangelo: but his mind was so elevated that he was never satisfied with what he had done, despite doing everything well” (*Leonard de Vinci fut egal en toutes choses à Michel Ange: mais il avoit l'esprit si élevé qu'il n'etoit jamais content de ce qu'il avoit fait, & quoiqu'il fit tout bien*) (1735, p. 273–275) and, for André Félibien, the works of the Parmesan had something that distinguished them from the others, through their art and their elegance (1672, *3<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 137–138). This was something the French theorist considered under the concept of “theory” (1685, *8<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 3113–12), as opposed to that of “practice”, which referred to all that, in an art, can be learned.

In most texts, however, the mind was not a normative category, but rather a descriptive one. The “mind” was a “natural talent that cannot

be acquired by studying or work” (*talent naturel qui ne s’acquiert ny par l’estude, ny par le travail*) (Fréart de Chambray, 1662, I, p. 11); but the term “talent”, here, which André Félibien (1672, *3<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 61) and Roger de Piles (1684, p. 35–36) associated with the concepts of “taste” (*goût*), “disposition” (*disposition*) and “genius” (*génie*), referred to the natural dispositions that all individuals have. Everyone has a “mind”, within which he conceives his thoughts (Félibien, 1672, *3<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 290; Restout, 1681, p. 73), and which orients his choices. Each artist thus had to be aware of the specific nature of his own mind—or his parents and masters had to teach him how to become aware of it—so that he could make choices in terms of subject and execution corresponding to his nature (Goeree, 1670, *voor-reden*, p. \*9).

The consequence of these two definitions of mind was two possible applications. The first referred the mind of a painter to his ability to make good choices (Van Mander, 1604, *Grondt*, II, iii, fol. 8v<sup>o</sup>) and to shape and organise mental images (Dolce, 1735, p. 175; Goeree, 1670, p. 42–43; Sandrart, 1675, p. 61; Sandrart, 1679, p. 19). From this point of view, the quality of a mind was measured in terms of the coherence the painter gave to these choices, rather than in terms of the supposed nobility of the objects on which those choices fell. In absolute terms, a painter who represented animals or flowers without working “on the spot” (*naer het leven*) but using his mind (*uyt den gheest*), could show as many qualities (Goeree, 1670, p. 31, 51–52) as a painter focusing on history, on the condition that he be “able to envisage things depending on whether he is well or badly disposed; that is, that he has conceived a good or bad idea of them” (*capable d’envisager les choses selon qu’il est bien ou mal tourné; c’est à dire, qu’il en a conçu une bonne ou mauvaise idée*): “the good Taste of a beautiful work is the conformity of the parts with the whole, and the whole with perfection” (*le bon Goust dans un bel Ouvrage est une conformité des parties avec leur tout, & du tout avec la perfection*, (Piles, 1677, p. 37–38). The “taste” of the “mind” was not judged on the nature of what the painter had chosen to compose, but on the nature of the composition itself, in such a way that the great artists like the Carracci (De Piles, 1684, p. 11), Peter Paul Rubens (De Piles, 1677, p. 222–223) or François Boucher (Baillet de Saint-Julien, 1750, first letter, p. 8–9) were capable of changing their mind in relation to the subjects and specific constraints of each of their works. In this respect, the painter’s work was essentially an exercise in translation and clarification: he had to find visual equivalents for the ideas that his mind provided him with in confusion (Pader, 1657, “Explication

des mots et termes de la Peinture, qui se trouvent marquez de Paraffes”, n.p.; p. 33-34; Sandrart, 1675, p. 60); and, for that, he had to “express his thought more clearly and more vividly” (*exprimer plus nettement & plus vivement sa pensée*) (De Piles, 1684, p. 28–30).

On the contrary, if we retain the normative definition of mind, and if we consider that there are artists who have more or less, we move towards a more restrictive application of the term. When artists have a “feeble mind”, or when they do not know how to use their mind, they tend to focus on simply imitating the models found in nature and the Old Masters (Goeree, 1670, p. 63–64). When, on the other hand, they are “free spirits”, they make themselves capable of imitating nature by going beyond the accidental and imperfect forms, moving closer to the ideal beauty that they shape according to their understanding (Junius, 1641, p. 6, 15, 325).

#### Invention or Execution?

If the mind is thus at the heart of liberal arts, and the mind of a painter “appears in all he does” (*paroist dans tout ce qu’il fait*) (Félibien, 1679, 5<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 94–95), what remains to be known is whether or not there is a spirit that is specific to painting. The theorists provided three main responses to this question.

The first, which is also the most ancient and the most traditional, associated the mind with invention, thus making it a quality that is extrinsic to painting. This is in opposition to what Roger de Piles (1677, p. 10–11) referred to, before Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d’Argenville (1745–1755, t. I, p. xxiv), as the “nature of the mind” (*caractère de l’esprit*) and the “nature of the hand” (*caractère de la main*). This idea was defended in particular by Franciscus Junius. For the Dutch scholar, the painter’s hand had to submit to the ideas of his mind (1641, p. 27, 216, 307), to the extent that “the invention consists mainly in the force of our soul” (*d’Inventie bestaet voornaemelick in de kracht onses ghemoeds*). For other theorists, the mind that a painter forms by reading great texts or studying sciences allows him to avoid errors in terms of historical truth (Angel, 1642, p. 44; Fréart de Chambray, 1662, p. 129; Bosse, 1667, p. 34; Goeree, 1670, p. 59) or the representation of perspective (Bosse, 1667, p. 11–12; Sandrart, 1675, p. 62). The mind, defined in this way, is essential for painters who do not wish to be reduced to mere craftsmen (Fréart de Chambray, 1662, p. 133; Browne, 1675, “To the reader”, n.p.; Sandrart, 1675, *Vorrede*, p. 55).

Junius nevertheless recognised that there was also a spirit particular to artists that formed, so to speak, the intrinsic knowledge of their art. Earlier than Félibien (1672, 4<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 402–403), he thus noticed the particular way in which painters “imprint” on their mind “real representations” (*de waere verbeeldinghen* [ . . . ] *op te legghen*) of what they want to represent (1641, p. 5). This spirit did not concern only the “visualisation” of the artist’s thoughts, but also, on the model of orators, their visual communication (De Piles, 1668, p. 77). It allowed the artist to “pre-view”, that is, *see in his mind* as well as *show*, in the simplest and most natural way possible: “it is necessary, I tell you, to predict the effect of Groups, the Background and the Chiaroscuro of each object, the Harmony of the Colours and the Intelligence of the entire Subject, in such a way that what you place on the canvas is merely a Copy of what you have in your Mind” (*il faut, dis-je, prévoir l’effet des Groupes, le Fond, & le Clair-Obscur de chaque chose, l’Harmonie des Couleurs, & l’intelligence de tout le Sujet, de sorte que ce que vous mettez sur la toile ne soit qu’une Copie de ce que vous avez dans l’esprit*, De Piles, 1668, p. 142–143). To do so, and this was a paradoxical fact on which Willem Goeree (1670, p. 24, 29–30, 41–42, 103–104; 1682, p. 34–36, 41, 204–205, 410–411), Joachim von Sandrart (1675, p. 60–64; 1679, p. 15) and Samuel van Hoogstraten (1678, p. 35) insisted particularly: the observation of nature, study of the masters, and the practice that artists must do, following the example of the Lorrain (Sandrart, 1675, p. 71).

These reflections ultimately led certain theorists, such as Philips Angel (1642, p. 38), Joachim von Sandrart (1675, p. 12, 58–61, 72; 1679, p. 12) or Samuel van Hoogstraten (1678, p. 3–4) to add that there was a specifically technical mind for painting. If François La Mothe Le Vayer explained that “the work of the brush depends much more on the head than on the hand” (*l’ouvrage du pinceau depend bien plus de la teste que de la main*), it was a means of affirming “that the spirit of Painters of good reputation seems to be right to the tips of their fingers” (*que l’esprit des Peintres de reputation semble estre tout entier au bout de leurs doigts*) (1648, p. 100–101), as shown in the works of Rubens (1648, p. 106–107). This idea was taken up and developed by Roger de Piles. The French theorist refused to see the “nature of the hand” (*caractère de la main*) strictly subjected to the “nature of the mind” (*caractère de l’esprit*):

The nature of the hand, continued Pamphile, was nothing but a particular habit that each takes to form his letters, and the nature of the

mind is the style of discourse, and the turn one gives to ones thoughts. In Paintings, we find both these natures: that of the hand is the habit that each Painter has adopted to use his Brush; and that of the mind is the Genius of the Painter.

*(Le caractère de la main continua Pamphile, n'est autre chose qu'une habitude toute singulière que chacun prend de former ses lettres, & le caractère de l'esprit est le stile du discours, & le tour que l'on donne à ses pensées. On trouve dans les Tableaux ces deux caractères: celui de la main, est l'habitude que chaque Peintre a contractée de manier le Pinceau; & celui de l'esprit est le Génie du Peintre.)* (Piles, 1677, p. 10–11)

### The Spirit of the Beholder

By organising the material of his works, a painter thus worked for himself, but also for the beholder, to whose mind he was speaking directly. Works of art were thus not objects closed in on themselves. Through this sharing of sensations, they formed interfaces within which the imagination of the artists and the spectators were able to dialogue (1641, p. 31). This dialogue could take different forms. It could be created by the forms themselves of the work. The first to have emphasised this was Leonardo da Vinci. He observed that by deploying himself in his works, the painter's mind could encourage a form of communication, or even communion, with spectator's mind. In this case, it was a question of finding the “means to arouse [his] spirit, and excite [his] imagination” (*moyen d'éveiller [son] esprit, & d'exciter [son] imagination*) (Vinci, 1651, XVI, p. 4). It was necessary to arouse his interest, by refusing to determine with too much precision the contours and even the appearance of the objects (Goeree, 1670, p. 116) or figures represented (Browne, 1675, p. 9–10). Leonardo thus gave the famous example of the stains on the wall, whilst Willem Goeree used the veins in marble (Goeree, 1670, p. 19). Even if these forms had been created by chance, they could encourage the painter's mind to create its own mental images, using these natural forms as his inspiration. But, for this purpose, it was essential that the brush remained lively, particularly in the treatment of “leaves, hair, skies and drapes, all that reveals the spirit” (*bladen, hayr, locht, en laken, / Dat is al gheest*); Van Mander, 1604, *Grondt*, VIII, 37, fol. 37r<sup>o</sup>-v<sup>o</sup>). If represented with too much detail, these patterns would not be able to create in the spectator's mind a living impression of nature in movement. The “hand” needed

to remain “free” (*freyer Hand*), that is, that it reveal on the surface of the work the traces of its movements (Sandrart, 1675, p. 63–66).

By not erasing the traces of his brushstrokes, a painter effectively allowed spectators looking at his works to have the impression of seeing him still at work, and of feeling the “fire” in his spirit, this freedom of execution (Félibien, 1672, 4<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 407), this impression of movement (Browne, 1675, p. 30, 48–49), that sweep along adhesion through participation, and that is only truly visible in sketches (Richardson, 1719, p. 50–51), original works—rather than copies (Richardson, 1719, p. 193)—as well as in barely finished paintings and etchings (Richardson, 1719, p. 198). But it also offered the possibility of entering into discussion with the very rules of his art. A work creates images in the mind of the spectator who, in return, can analyse them and, if he knows a little of the practice of artists and the artifices they are used to using, try to understand the reasons for these effects:

I admit, I repeat, that the greatest satisfaction that one can receive when considering a Painting, is that at the same time that the eyes see with joy the beautiful mix of colours and the artifice of the brush, the mind learns something new in the invention of the subject, and in the faithful representation of the action that the Painter has tried to reveal.

*(J'avouë repartis-je, que la plus grande satisfaction qu'on puisse recevoir en considerant un Tableau, c'est qu'au mesme temps que les yeux voient avec joye le beau mélange des couleurs, & l'artifice du pinceau, l'esprit apprend quelque chose de nouveau dans l'invention du sujet, & dans la fidelle representation de l'action que le Peintre a prétendu faire voir.)*

(Félibien, 1672, 3<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 157–158)

In this context, it was no longer simply the imagination that was stimulated in the mind of the spectator; it was his understanding which, by rationalising the sensorial experience, often thanks to the assistance of a master or a colleague, was capable of deducing the rules of the variety of forms that he was observing, better even than the “cabbalists” (*cabalistes*) who “admired [beauties] in the works of their masters” (*admirent [les beautés] dans les ouvrages de leurs chefs*) (Restout, 1681, p. 126).

Jan BLANC

[Translated by Kristy Snaith]



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Model  $\Rightarrow$  academy, Antiquity, copy/original, Idea, imagination, imitation, studio  
 Modern  $\Rightarrow$  Antiquity  
 Monochrome painting  $\Rightarrow$  Chiaroscuro  
 Motion  $\Rightarrow$  Attitude  
 Musique  $\Rightarrow$  Harmony

# N

Naked  $\implies$  Academy, Carnation

## NATURALNESS/NATURAL

fr.: *naturel*

germ.: *Natürlich, Natürlichkeit*

nl.: *natuurlijk*

it.: *naturale, decoro naturale, dal naturale, cosa naturale*

**Art, nature, truth, life, lively, likelihood, *vraisemblance*, naturally beauty, resemblance**

*The question of naturalness was central to art theory in the modern era. It participated in the vast reflection of the time by painters and authors on the complex relationship between art and nature. The question of naturalness, which made it possible to return to the old opposition between imitation and invention in order to better go beyond it, as the prerogative of Zeuxis and Parrhasios from Antiquity, then Caravaggio (1571–1610) in Italy (La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648, p. 107–108) and Gerrit Dou (1613–1675) in Holland (Angel, 1642), also made it possible to reconsider the supposed realism of Dutch painting, an anachronistic term still often used to describe, whilst confusing them, certain pictorial effects implemented by the artists at the time. Far richer, the very idea of nature varied, in its definition, for most authors: beyond the largely ancient argument concerning the Paragone debate on the*

*relative conformity of sculpture and painting with nature, it was necessary to distinguish the natural manner with which painters had to know how to work, observation of the particular things in nature, understood here as all of the visible world, and the imitation of nature rather than the old masters.*

### The Natural as Model

The question of imitating nature occupied a central role in the traditional comparison between painting, sculpture and poetry, with nature capable of being perceived as an inventory of both forms and matter from which sculptors could take their inspiration without transforming it, unlike painters who were limited to the patterns and subjects that it proposed. The natural thus expressed nature as a direct model for the artist, playing amongst other things on a relationship of a measurement scale (Bosse, 1667, p. 13–14).

One thus painted “on the natural” (*sur le naturel*) just as one painted “from nature” (*d’après nature*, Vinci, 1651, chap. XX, p. 5; Testelin, s.d. [1693–1694], p. 11–12; Marsy, 1746, II, p. 6), two qualities that furthermore made it possible to distinguish original works from copies. There was also the portrait *au naturel*, to highlight the resemblance between the image produced and its model. But more than a model, the natural appeared for certain authors like a master in its own right, capable of replacing study of the ancients. The question of the *naar het leven* and the natural model could thus finally be opposed to the concept of *manner* and/or the fact of copying from the masters (Angel, 1642, p. 53).

At the end of the 17th century in France, the idea of natural referred to the principles of nature, but also took an interest in its different products. In that, the concept of natural was essentially defined through opposition with “artificial”, or anything built by the hand of man. The noble and supreme model was thus embodied by nature, in opposition with the manner of the old masters that could not be copied under any circumstance, and with the study of nature thus forming an essential stage in all artistic learning (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 169).

### The Natural as Manner

But of the different qualities that a painter had to have if he wanted to be able, one day, to achieve recognition, the one that stood out at the time was the need for “natural” imitation of nature, sufficiently

accurate for the things represented to appear “almost real” to the spectator (Angel, 1642, p. 38–39). This priority given to the perception and observation of the “particular things of nature” had above all to allow artists to focus their attention on certain optical effects in order to reproduce them accurately.

It was in this idea of natural that lay in particular the so-called “realistic” dimension of Dutch painting, an anachronistic conception inherited from French criticism in the 19th century. The real was still far from being a stable and unequivocal notion in the 17th century, if the work of philosophers is anything to go by where, like Descartes, they appeared to question it in order to better distort it. The “real” was effectively perceived by the learned and the artists of the time as an illusion produced by the senses. The whole issue for these artists was thus to retranscribe some of the optical effects present in Nature (Testelin, s.d. [1693–1694], p. 29).

### The Natural and the Fine in Art

Another dimension of nature appeared if we consider to what degree, unlike sculpture, painting was capable of representing all visible things (Angel, 1642, p. 25). Beyond the Dutch equivalent *natuurlijk* Philips Angel thus spoke in 1641 of *natuurlijckheden* to describe in certain artists their ability to reproduce certain visual, and particularly chromatic, effects, as well as certain optical phenomena. In a historical register, the idea of nature could also concern the field of action or the gesture, and form a rampart against anachronism in painting.

To evoke the quality of such visual properties rendered by the Dutch artists, and particularly the Leiden’s artists of the period, such as Gerrit Dou, Angel also spoke of *eyghentlijckheyt* (*eigenlijkheid*) to define these same properties. The natural could then be praised as an aesthetic quality, with the artist being supposed to efface himself behind a manner that would betray his presence. The natural thus also expressed an idea of freedom, or the absence of constraint in the art of an artist. This was an idea of ease and facility that could be associated with Raphael-style *sprezzatura*. Therefore, the natural was above all perceived in painting as an effect, an illusion, an “artifice of nature” more than a quality in the material sense of the term.

The natural, a synonym of beauty as the link between the truth and the agreeable (Le Comte, 1699–1700, I, p. 73–75), was for this reason for a large number of theorists of the modern period the very purpose

of art and this, whether it was a question of painting or sculpture (Pader, 1649, préface).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Nature  $\implies$  Beauty, Choice, Effect, Antiquity, Genius, Imitation,  
Natural/Naturalness

## NIGHT PIECE

fr.: *nuit, nocturne*

germ.: *Nacht, Nachtstück*

nl.: *nacht (stuck)*

it.: *notte*

lat.: *opus nocturnum, pictura nocurna*

### Light, *chiaroscuro*, reflection

Whereas Van Mander's *Grondt* (1604) was still close to Lomazzo's metaphysical conception of light, the discourse on night pieces was transformed under the impetus of the writings of Leonardo Da Vinci. The metaphors and poetic evocations gave way to a discourse oriented on the description of processes. The topic nevertheless remained relatively rare in the theory of the 17th century, with only Sandrart devoting long passages to them.

The question of night pieces was not to be confused by any theorist with the treatment of *chiaroscuro*, and the examples that were cited since Antiphilus (*Young boy blowing on a firebrand*), were Raphael (1483–1520, *The Liberation of Saint Peter*, 1514, *Chambre d'Héliodore*, Vatican), Correggio (v. 1489–1534, *Holy Night*, 1522–1530, *Gemäldegalerie*, Dresde), and the paintings of Gerrit van Honthorst (1592–1656) or Elsheimer (1578–1610). They all have their light source visible in the painting.

Van Mander's instructions (1604, VII, v. 31–35) were very succinct. They were given in the chapter that the theorist devoted to reflection, reverberation and they were limited to the need to paint together the flame, the reflection and the smoke, stressing the effects on the figure that had to be dark at the front and visible above all thanks to its outlines. Da Vinci (in the *Traité* published in 1651) touched on three different aspects in the treatment of night pieces. It was necessary on the one hand to use a paper or fine canvas to hide the light so that the shadows were not too bold (1651, chap. XXXIV, p. 9). On the other, it was important to make sure that a figure positioned before a dark place did not receive any reflections, and that one could see only the part that was lit (1651, chap. LV, p. 14). After having spoken of necessary light and its incidence in painting, Da Vinci then touched more precisely on the question of colours in the chapter titled *How to represent Night* (1651, chap. LXV, p. 16). He thus provided as a fundamental precept that it was necessary to start with red of the fire. The aim was to make the figures appear as reddish forms that blended into a black background, or as a "half-red and half-dark tint". Da Vinci also dealt with the expression of the movements of the figures that had to signify both the strong light and heat of the fire, and thus cover or hide the face. In his chapter on light, the studio and night pieces (1675, chap. XI, *Von dem Liecht und Malzimmer auch Nacht-Stucken*, p. 80), partly included in the chapter on union and the friendship of colours

(1679, chap. VI, *Von Ordnung und Austheilung der Farben und ihrer vollständigen Vermählung oder Gesellung*, p. 19), Sandrart returned to all these indications and developed them, giving precisions regarding the colours to be used (minium red and Naples yellow). He nevertheless rejected Da Vinci's proposition of using oil paper and a stretcher, and proposed his own method, based on observation. He thus described in great detail the necessary arrangements: a large fire or a lamp lit in a dark place in which the figure is situated; and specified that the painter had to remain on the outside, in the daylight, in order to see the colours (1679, p. 20). Observation seconded by memory thus allowed the painter to render the natural effect. But the interests of these two theorists were different. Da Vinci's interest in the moving effects of shadow was similar to that that he had in the different elements and their transformation. Sandrart positioned himself in another point of view, and sought to explain the practice of the representation of night because he appreciated this pictorial genre, which he practised throughout his career.

Whereas the French texts remained silent on this subject, the notice for Watelet-Levesque's *Encyclopédie*, written by Robin, returned to this question of execution but proposed another approach. If the general tint was red, he said, it meant that the painter had imitated the natural, but had done his painting during the day, whereas it was necessary "to conceive his painting at night, and fully capture the effect to the point of being able to execute it without having the model before his eyes" (*concevoir son tableau la nuit, et bien saisir l'effet au point de pouvoir l'exécuter sans avoir le modèle devant les yeux*). This difference in opinion came from the fact that between 1679 and 1788, not only had tastes changed, but also because the very conception of painting had been modified: an artificial light was not what it was, but what it appeared to be. And the lights of the night, fire and torches were considered to be picturesque effects mastered by artists such as Rembrandt (1606–1669, *The Night Watch*, 1642, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam), Rubens (1577–1640, *The Flight from Blois*, 1624, Louvre, Paris), or Bassano (c. 1510–1592) and Valentin (1591–1632). However, the paintings in the manner of Gottfreid Schalken (1643–1706), cited by Pernety, who devoted a very short notice to this pictorial genre, were appreciated diversely, and considered as an easy means for artists to hide weakness. The Robin article concluded with the anecdote by Jouvenet (1644–1717) following the reception of a painter for a work representing a woman holding a light in the night: "we received an

Academician for a piece of candle” (*nous avons reçu un Académicien pour un bout de chandelle*, Watelet-Levesque, 1788–1792).

Michèle-Caroline HECK  
[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Da Vinci, 1651; Lomazzo, 1584; Pernety, 1757; Sandrart, 1675, 1679; Van Mander, 1604; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1792.

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Nobility  $\implies$  Painting



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Observation  $\implies$  Imitation, Landscape Ordinance  $\implies$  Composition, Group

**ORIGINAL  $\implies$  COPIE**

**ORNEMENT**

fr.: *ornement*

germ.: *Zier, Zierde, Zierrat, Ausschmückung*

nl.: *versiering, stoffage, bijwerk, bebeelding, opproncksel, versiering, pronksieraad, sieraad, overwerck, toevoegsel*

it.: *ornamento*

lat.: *parergon*

**By-work, addition, embellishment, agreeableness, pleasure, beautiful, grace, variety, decorum, parergon, improvement, festoon, artifice, caprice, grotesque, glory**

*Nothing is less unequivocal than the term ornament in the artistic literature of the modern age. Defined in Furetière's dictionary as "that which decorates something, that which renders more beautiful, more agreeable", its meaning also extended beyond the thought of art, into religious, moral or social fields. Before being considered in the 19th century as an artistic category in its own*

*right, defined by specific rules and practices particular to what was then called the decorative arts, ornament was essentially considered during the modern period in terms of its relationship with the other arts, for which its main aim was to embellish them. As such, it constituted a key concept that was imprinted implicitly throughout the artistic literature of the period, and in particular in the theory of architecture, where it was the subject of a very specific discussion. In its definition, however, it remained vague and elusive: as much a synonym of beauty, as a term associated with the semantic chain of the accessory, ornament was essentially understood through the prism of a dialectic between the necessary and the superfluous, the principal and the secondary, the structural and the additional, and made it possible in this sense to consider hierarchies between the arts.*

### Between Order, Beauty and Addition

This ambivalence of which ornament was composed had already appeared in the etymology of the word: taken from the Latin *ornamentum*, from the group *ordo* (*ornare* deriving from *ordinare*), ornament initially referred to bringing order to the world and sequencing (*ordinatio*). In this sense, it found an equivalent in the Greek word *kósmos* and its derivatives *kosmèsis*, *épikosmèsis*, designating not only the order obtained from chaos thanks to the action of the demiurge, forming the foundation for the smooth running of the universe, but also embellishment, adornment, jewellery or make-up, in brief, all the artifice of adornment envisaged through the prism of a cosmetic. In the Middle Ages, the meaning of the word remained stable: the *ornamentum* retained its classic meaning of equipment useful for the smooth running of something, while *ornatus*, the Latin equivalent of the Greek, evoked the idea of beauty and divine order.

Associated with beauty, on the cusp of the Renaissance, ornament became a central concept in artistic literature, without being the subject for all that of any specific theorisation, which did not come until the 19th century. It should be specified that the discussion on ornament was first of all a matter for architecture, with the latter even being defined by the former in the words of Vignole, who assimilated architecture with “a practice of ornaments” (*une pratique des ornements*, 1562, pl. 3). All theoretical undertaking thus gave itself the objective of defining and fixing the forms and uses of this “main ornament of architecture” (*principal ornement de l’architecture*) which were orders (d’Aviler, 1691, préface). When it was identified with orders, orna-

ment was understood in its primary function of *ordinatio* and presented itself in this sense as “essential” in the practice of architecture: *firmitas*, *utilitas* and *venustas*, the three principles of Vitruvius’ famous triad, were then considered in the wake of Vitruvius as inextricably linked, in such a way that the ornament (or order, of which the paradigm was the column) contributed as much to the beauty as to the solidity or destination of a construction. Yet, for the moderns, ornament also took on another meaning. It effectively designated, as expressed so clearly by Perrault, “all things that are not essential parts, but which were added only to render the work richer and more beautiful” (*toutes les choses qui ne sont point des parties essentielles, mais qui sont ajoutées seulement pour rendre l’ouvrage plus riche et plus beau*), such as foliage or other mouldings of a sculpted decor (1684, p. 6). This rupture between ornament and the body of architecture was in reality inaugurated by Alberti. Although he granted an important role to ornament in his treatise, for him ornament represented “a feigned or added nature” (*un caractère feint ou ajouté*) and was defined as “a sort of auxiliary light to the beauty and as a complement” (*une sorte de lumière auxiliaire de la beauté et comme un complément*, 1485, livre VI). In opposition to the central concept in Alberti’s treatise, the *concinnitas* or beauty inherent to elegant proportion, ornament was thus considered as a superficial phenomenon, or even as the means of masking errors of construction. With Alberti, ornament thus passed from the realm of beauty to that of embellishment: less consistent but nevertheless essential. In brief, with Alberti a more negative or marginal conception of ornament was outlined, based on a strict economy of means corresponding to an ideal of *frugalitas* or sobriety, of which all the partisans of classicism claimed to be a part.

### Ornament as Embellishment

This conception of ornament as an addition destined to embellish was scattered throughout all art literature and was expressed, at the end of the 17th century, in Baldinucci’s *Vocabolario*: “Embellishment is said of material things that are added to something to make it agreeable [*vago*] and beautiful [*bello*]” (*Embellissement, se dit à proprement parler des choses matérielles qui sont ajoutées à quelque chose, pour le rendre agréable [*vago*] et beau [*bello*]*, 1681, s.v. *ornamento*). With the terms *Zier*, *Zierde* and *Versiering*, *Verscheidenheid* or *Sieraad* as the equivalents in German and Dutch, this definition summarised well the specificities

of ornament in the modern era and the semantic fields associated with it: that of beauty and that of addition. On the one hand, ornament was thus a synonym of adornment (*parure*) or foil (*faire-valoir*), it was associated with grace (*grâce*), brilliance (*éclat*), shine (*lustre*) and agreement (*agrément*). On the other, the additive value of ornament was expressed by the semantic field of the *accessory*, designated in German by the terms *Beifügung* or *Zugehörung*, and *addition* or *by-work* in English. Dutch had a whole range of terms to express this added quality to ornament: *stoffagien*, *bebeelding*, *adjecten*, *additien*, *vermeeren*, *toevoegsel*, *bijwerk* or *overwerck*, which found an equivalent in the Latin word *parergon*, meaning what was added to a work to decorate it (*versieren*), as stated by Junius citing Quintilian (1641, p. 349).

What made ornament so elusive within the artistic literature of the period was that, no more in the field of architecture than in that of painting, ornament was not limited to designating motifs that could be identified within a defined artistic tradition, as the *grotesques*, *scallops* or other *cartouches*. Designating more broadly whatever “contributed to embellishment” (*contribue à l’embellissement*, Pernetty, 1757), the concept of ornament was omnipresent because it was potentially everything and everywhere. Thus, in the field of architecture, rather like the Russian doll principle, the column was perceived as the ornament of architecture, the capital as the ornament of the column, the astragal as that of the capital and foliage as that of the astragal (d’Aviler, 1691). The same was true of the “ornaments of a painting” (*ornements du tableau*). These were potentially infinite: the draperies and folds of clothes for De Piles (1715, p. 5), ancient figures with their movement for Hilaire Pader (1649, I, chapitre 2, p. 11), the elements of decor such as architecture, antique vases, animals, trees etc. and more generally “all things exterior to the History that is represented” (*toutes les choses exterieures à l’Histoire qu’on represente*, Dupuy du Grez, 1699, 4<sup>e</sup> dissertation). Painting itself was defined as ornament when it was a question of insisting on the nobility of this art: it was presented in the words of Dolce as an “ornament for the world” (*ornement au monde*) and, because it “enriched all things” (*enrichit toutes choses*), it was the “most beautiful ornament” (*plus bel ornament*) for buildings (1735, p. 125–127, 145–147). As it designated one thing that was added to another, ornament made it possible in painting to think about the hierarchies between the principle and the accessory, and between genres, as clearly expressed by Dezallier d’Argenville: landscape, animals and flowers “serve only in most cases to decorate the subjects of the

history” (*ne servent le plus souvent qu’à orner les sujets d’histoire*), they “are only accessory” (*n’en sont que l’accessoire*, 1745–1752, I, p. IX). Similarly, Van Hoogstraten explained that the ancients referred to the still life as *parerga* because it “was like excesses or additions to the main parts of their works” (*étaient comme des excès ou des ajouts aux parties principales de leurs œuvres*, 1678, livre III, p. 76).

### *Copia, varietas and decorum*

In his treatise on painting, Alberti had borrowed the ancient rhetorical principles of abundance (*copia*) and above all variety (*varietas*) to make them the main modalities of the *ornatus* of a painting (1435, livre II). Participating in the *topos* of the analogy between painting and discourse, these principles were exploited north of the Alps by artists such as Van Mander. The latter granted a significant place to the notions of addition or amplification (*adjecten, additien, vermeeren*) but even more to variety (*verscheydenheyt*), which “produces a great and praiseworthy beauty” (*produit une grande et louable beauté*, 1604, p. 23), “entertains the gaze” (*divertit le regard*), “gives shine” (*donne du lustre*) and brightens up the history (Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 141).

Nevertheless, as specified by Félibien, “this agreeableness must always come from the subject one is dealing with” (*cet agreable doit naistre toujours du sujet que l’on traite*, Félibien, 1679, 5<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 110). For, if ornament was linked to pleasure and agreement, and it took on the functions of *delectare* and *movere*, it also had to participate in *docere*: as explained by Pernety, the painter could add accessories to the subject, either “to better explain his intention” (*pour expliquer mieux son intention*), or “to increase the expression” (*pour augmenter l’expression*, 1757). For Dupuy du Grez, it was important that these accessories serve “the purpose that the Painter proposed” (*à la fin que le Peintre se propose*, 1699, 4<sup>e</sup> dissertation), and for De Lairese that they were “appropriate for the site” (*convenables au site*) and that this site was specific to the subjects treated (1787, p. 14–16). It was a question there of another principle borrowed from ancient rhetoric, that of convenience (*decorum*), a key principle that had to assure the correspondence between the ornament, the subject and the circumstances of the discourse. Although the notion of decorum was central in Alberti’s treatise on architecture—and was used up until Quatremère de Quincy and even beyond as the guarantee of good architecture—, it was already essential in his treatise on painting: the *copia* had to

be subordinate to the *compositio* at the risk of falling into *dissolutus* or, in the words of Dolce, into “affectation, which removes the grace from all things” (*l’affectation, qui ote la grace a toutes choses*, 1735, p. 223–225). When the ornament tipped into excess, or if it was not suitable for the subject, either it was condemned by all the authors who defended the ideal of sobriety, such as Junius or Félibien, or it was subjected to a principle of convenience by those who defended its use. By affirming that the ornaments needed to be deployed with discretion and economy, François-Marie de Marsy clearly posed the terms of the debate: “without that a Painter would deserve the reproach that Apelles made one day of one of his pupils, who tried to produce a painting of Helen, and had covered her in gold and precious jewels. Having been unable to paint her as beautiful, Apelles told him, you have made her rich” (*sans cela un Peintre mériteroit le reproche qu’Apelle fit un jour à un de ses disciples, qui ayant fait un tableau d’Helene, l’avoit chargée d’or & de pierreries; n’ayant pû la faire belle, lui dit Apelle, vous l’avez fait riche*, 1746, II, p. 31). For although beauty was for some the field of efficacy for ornament, for Félibien, and all those who developed a negative impression of ornament: “beauty does not consist of adornments or ornaments” (*la beauté ne consiste point dans les parures, & dans les ornemens*, Félibien, 1679, 5<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 110).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Alberti, 1435 [1540], 1485; Aviler, 1691; Baldinucci, 1681; Boffrand, 1745; De Lairese, 1707 [1787]; Dezallier d’Argenville, 1745–1752; Dolce, 1557 [1735]; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Furetière, 1690; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Marsy, 1746; Pader, 1649; Pernety, 1757; Perrault, 1684; Scamozzi, 1764; Van Mander, 1604; Vignole, 1562.

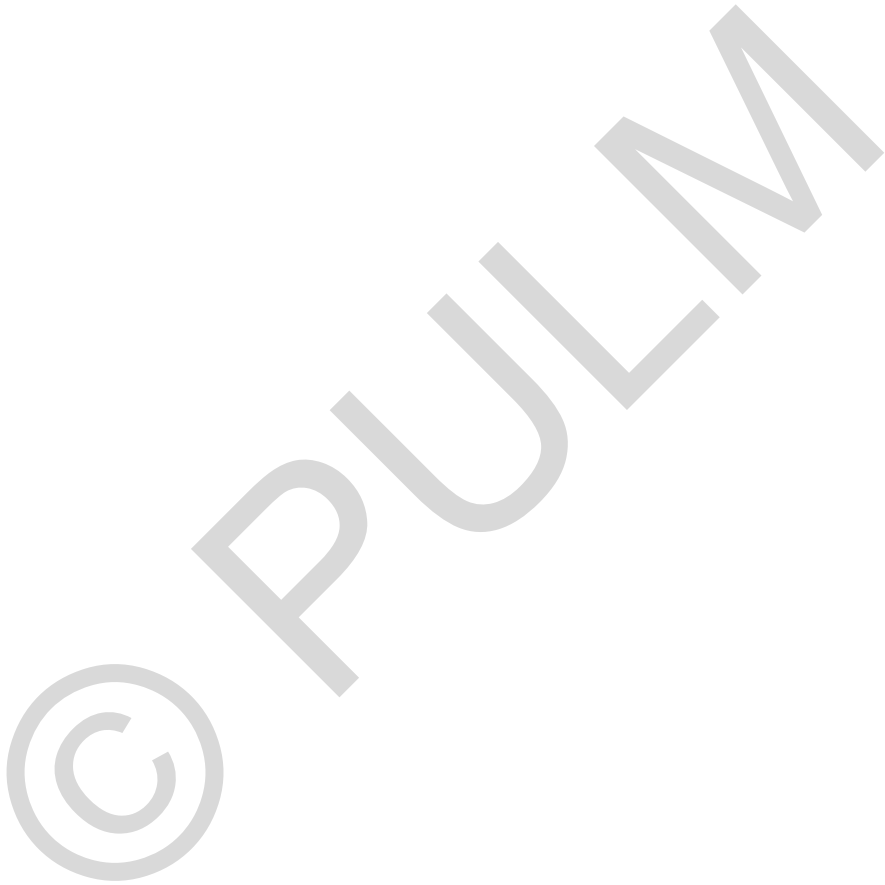
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# P

Pageantry ⇒ Artifice, Colour, Colouring

## PAINTER

fr.: *peintre*  
germ.: *Maler, Kunstmaler*  
nl.: *schilder*  
it.: *pittore*  
lat.: *pictor*

**Craftsman, workman, artist, picture-maker, dauber, blockish painter, poor painter, talent, gift, inclination, ability, skill, genius, practice, eye, understanding**

*Craftsman, workman, painter, artist: the vocabulary used in the writings on art to describe the practioners followed the same paradox as the term art. Artist was thus, like the term art, used relatively rarely by the theorists. This might seem even more astonishing given that these texts were often written by the artists themselves. Their aim was to show the principles, nature, manner and quality of the art of painting, and to be useful to both painters by building up teaching of artistic practice, and art lovers by educating their way of looking at art so as to encourage patronage or the art market. Great importance was given to the distinction between good and bad painters—more than to the difference between artist and craftsman—*

*contributing to establish a portrait of a painter. Just as the comparison with poets served to promote painters, the idea of the nobility of painting also had the same aim. It was fame that, since Antiquity, had created the nobility of art, and it was the value of the works that created that of the painters. Thus the links that painters had with art lovers also started to take shape.*

### Good Painter-Bad Painter

the Word Painter does not generally carry with it an Idea equal to what we have of other Professions [ . . . ] the Reason of which is, That Term is appropriated to all sorts of Pretenders to the Art, which being Numerous, and for the most part very Deficient, (as it must needs happen, so few having Abilities and Opportunities equal to such an Undertaking). (1725, p. 31–32)

The idea put forward by Richardson that the word Painter applied to all “Pretenders to the Art”, regardless of their quality, was very common and the subject of long discussions. Van Mander had already used the image that there were “between painters and painters” (*Schilder, en Schilder*) a mountain that many gave up trying to climb because it was so arduous (1604, fol. 1r<sup>o</sup>). This differentiation was not based on the distinction between craftsman or even worker and painter. Junius certainly gave a negative connotation to the term *werck-meester* (craftsman) by associating it with a depreciatory adjective (Junius, 1641, II, X. 2), and Fréart de Chambray qualified as “mechanical worker he who only applied his mind to drawing from a Model” (*ouvrier mécanique celui qui n’applique son esprit qu’à dessigner d’après un Modèle*, 1662, p. 133). But more generally, the theorists recognised the qualities of excellence of a craftsman. Sanderson defined the art of the craftsman (*artificer*) with the same words as those used for the most perfect works executed with ease and an audacious, resolute spirit (“by a familiar facility in a free and quick spirit of a bold and resolute Artificer,” 1658, p. 5051). Félibien qualified the great painters or sculptors of Antiquity as “excellent craftsmen” (*d’excellents artisans*, 1676, p. 478). Du Bos almost systematically used this term as a synonym for that of painter, and even spoke of the noble craftsman (1740, p. 6–7, 25–27, 72–73). De Piles on the other hand introduced a distinction between painter and craftsman: the former possessed mastery of colour and *chiaroscuro*, and the latter of measurements and proportions (1715, p. 6).

On the other hand, the theorists worked hard to make the distinction between painters and *barbouilleurs* also referred to as, *peintrillons*,

*cacopeintres, maniéristes, libertins, pauvres peintres* in French, (*dauber, blockish painter, poor painter* or *picture-maker* in English, *Farben-Klecker, Stumpler, Hümppler* in German, and *brodder, brodelaar, kladschilder, knoer, brekebeen, laamschilder* in Dutch). *Cacopeintre*, that is, a poor painter or “bad genius of Painting” (*mauvais genie de la Peinture*, Restout, 1681, p. 11–12), or *barbouilleur* was “always a term of contempt” (*toujours un terme de mépris*, Marsy, 1746). In France, this discourse intervened in the context of the creation of academies: a good painter was one who learned within these institutions that were being set up. Pader encouraged young painters to not imitate in what’s they produced of bad quality (1657, p. 6). They were also used as counter-models: “Poor Painters are of great help in painting for they teach us what we must not do, their teaching is negative and abnutive [*sic*]” (*Les mauvais Peintres sont d’un grand secours dans la peinture car ils enseignent comme il ne faut pas faire, leur école est negative & abnutive [sic]*, Catherinot, 1687, p. 9). They were criticised essentially for the fact that they copied “mechanically a whole Painting figure by figure, without bringing to the work anything of themselves other than the pain and suggestion of a simple Worker” (*mechaniquement figure à figure tout un Tableau, sans y apporter du sien autre chose que la peine et la sujetion d’un simple Ouvrier*, Fréart, 1662, p. 90). De Piles also referred to the absence of variety in their invention to define the mannered painter “who repeats up to five or six times in the same Painting the same attitudes of the heads” (*qui repetent jusqu’à cinq ou six fois dans un mesme Tableau les mesmes Airs de teste*) which he opposed to the “genuinely skilled” (“*véritablement habile*”) painter (1668, p. 112–113). This lack of invention was further criticised by La Font de Saint-Yenne, who attributed it to ignorance and a lack of emulation (1747, p. 77–78). In Germany, the most common reproach that was made of them was the fact that they did not master the science of colouring and applied colour like dyers.

## The Qualities of the Painter

### *Virtuous Behaviour*

The vast majority of the treatises on painting started with an exhortation addressed to young painters. Vasari (1568) developed the idea of practising the art as a source of pleasure, honour and profit for the painter. Finally, he presented his book as an incentive to progress, that is, for learning and perfecting one’s art in order to obtain glory and immortality. Armenini (1587) situated himself in the context of

the decline of art that needed to be remedied. Thanks to the rules and precepts, he wanted to encourage young painters to practise painting with accuracy and application. The aim of Van Mander was not to put together a book of precepts, but rather a work that was addressed to the soul and memory, and which stimulated the painter's desire (*Exhortatie oft vermaninghe, aen d'aencomende schilder-jeuc*, which corresponded to chapter I of the *Grondt*, 1604). Sandrart took his inspiration from this text, but abandoned the heavy moralising stance in Van Mander's text. His goal was essentially to awaken the enthusiasm of young artists, whom he hoped to see commit themselves to the art of painting (1675, p. 57). The aim of these long passages, which were omnipresent in artistic literature, as much as in the *Lives* of artists, was to produce a perfect portrait of a painter through his behaviour, his aptitude and his work.

From the perspective of the link between the nobility of painting and that of the painter, Van Mander developed at length the vices and weaknesses that painters must avoid in order to cultivate their demanding art that he even qualified as jealous. From examples taken from Antiquity and the literature, he denounced drunkenness, the dissolute life and discord, and encouraged painters to adopt a life of well-ordered labour. Sandrart mentioned only Venus and Bacchus and idleness as the enemies of virtue, and encouraged young artists to adopt promptitude. The essential qualities that he recommended were those of the courtesans: discretion, modesty and politeness. Greatly inspired by Baldassare Castiglione's *Libro del Cortegiano*, published in Venice in 1528 and widely diffused thanks to the many translations that appeared in Europe in the 17th century, the theorists thus proposed an apprenticeship in good manners. These manners, based on propriety, were as necessary as good practices for achieving perfection (Sandrart, 1675, p. 58). This good education was also essential for Félibien, who defined the painter as a gentleman, and for Restout, who insisted on a "good education, which makes him civil, honest, gracious and moderate in his actions" (*bonne éducation, qui le rende civil, honneste, gracieux & moderé dans ses actions*, 1681, p. 73).

#### *The Learned Painter*

The portrait of the learned painter, also called the *doctus pictor* or *vernünfftiger Maler* or *verstandigh Schilder* also started to emerge. Knowledge that could not be limited to the practice of painting had

to extend to the sciences of the different parts, obliging young artists to take instruction and understand philosophy, geometry, perspective, architecture, anatomy, history and theology (De Piles, 1677, p. 89–90). But this was not enough to differentiate a painter from a good painter, and to make of him a learned painter. For that, an in-depth study of the texts was essential. A bibliography of theoretical texts accompanied the publication of Da Vinci's *Trattato* (taken up by Sandrart in 1675, p. 104–105, but which nevertheless did not feature in all editions). A list of books considered useful was also given by La Fontaine (1679, p. 56–57), and it included all the works that should make up their personal library, and allow them to read the history of several authors before starting to design their invention. But another quality was also necessary, a particular aptitude capable of producing perfection through the precise representation of things and the good disposition of the subject, thanks to reason or imagination (Sandrart, 1675, p. 79). This alone would give the painter the dignity of the learned man. For Félibien, was worthy of being called by this name only he who “ennobled the most common materials through the sublimity of his thoughts, and found in his imagination and in his memory, as from two inexhaustible sources, all that can make these Paintings entirely perfect” (*ennoblit les matieres les plus communes par la sublimité de ses pensées, & trouve dans son imagination & dans sa mémoire, comme dans deux sources inépuisables, tout ce qui peut rendre ses Tableaux entierement parfaits*, 1688, 9<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 3–4). Even though the concept of learned painter was less present in the writings of the 18th century, other expressions came to replace it, and La Font de Saint-Yenne spoke of the “Historian Painter [ . . . ] only the Painter of the soul, the others paint only for the eyes. He alone can bring into play this enthusiasm, this divine fire that enables him to imagine his Subjects in such a strong and sublime manner” (*Peintre Historien [ . . . ] seul le Peintre de l'ame, les autres ne peignent que pour les yeux. Lui seul peut mettre en œuvre cet enthousiasme, ce feu divin qui lui fait concevoir ses Sujets d'une manière forte & sublime*, 1747, p. 8).

#### *Natural Aptitude and Particular Talent*

Beyond all these qualities that the painter could acquire, the need to be born a painter in order to achieve perfection was, like all statements of innate gifts bestowed by the stars or nature, a common theme in artistic literature. This inclination alone could induce the love of

art and bring to life the spirit and the soul, and awaken genius. But considered as fertile ground, it was nevertheless not enough if it was not supported by hard work, in the context of good teaching. Junius, by superimposing the education of the painter on that of the orator, insisted just as much on the particular disposition given to each man, and on the application that needed to be made at the time of the apprenticeship and throughout the career (1637, II, 11.5). This natural tendency was not identical for everyone, but specific to each painter, depending on climatic determinism for certain theorists such as Du Bos (1740, p. 10–11). But it was more generally put into relation with the particular aptitude of each for one part of painting, or even one pictorial genre. This second conception of the notion of talent took its origin in Pliny's *Natural History* (Book XXXV) and attaches talent (*ingenium*) to a manner of painting or a specific subject in which the painter excelled. This conception also threw new light on the painters that could be qualified as specialists, and on the meaning that in France was given to this term in the common expression in French, "*peintre dans le talent des fleurs, des fruits ou des paysages . . .*" (a painter with talent for flowers, fruit or landscapes . . .). In German, this was *in etwas excellieren* or *Meister sein*. Fürst and Sandrart expressed this by saying that a painter could not achieve renown in all genres, and that he had to follow his talent and nature (Fürst, 1656, p. Biiiv; Sandrart, 1675, p. 58).

*Intelligence, the Hand, the Eye*

This particular aptitude of the painter concerned primarily the hand, but also applied to the intelligence or reason (*Verstand, mind, verstand*). All the meaning of practice was thus to allow the artist's intelligence to grow. The relationship established between the hand and the spirit played an important role in the evolution and mutation in the term *genius*, which started at the end of the 17th century and in which participated Sandrart, Hoogstraten and Roger De Piles, the latter devoting a chapter to *La nécessité du génie* in *L'Idée du peintre parfait* (1715). It was no longer a question of the simple ingenuity of the hand or the skill of knowledge or know-how, or even of the mastery of the rules. Du Bos developed this notion considerably: "We know that the Painter, inventor and original, is, as much as the great Poet, susceptible to the beautiful fire, this enthusiasm, which we cannot command, for which we must wait for the inspiration" (*L'on sait que le Peintre inventeur*

& original est autant que le grand Poëte, susceptible de ce beau feu, de cet enthousiasme, auquel on ne commande point, & dont il faut attendre l'inspiration, 1740, p. 20–21). Whilst specifying the role of the hand, he furthermore introduced that of the eye in this relationship between an innate gift and practice on the one hand, and between the hand, reason and imagination on the other:

Genius has, so to speak, its arms bound in a craftsman, whose hand is not tied. The eye is the same as the hand [ . . . ] If the imagination does not have at its disposal a hand and an eye capable of seconding its will, all that remains of the beautiful ideas that the imagination invents is a vulgar painting, that even the Craftsman himself who painted it holds in disdain, so much he finds the work of his hand inferior to that of the work in his mind. The study needed to perfect the eye and the hand is not achieved by devoting a few distracted hours to interrupted work. Such study requires one's full attention and continuous perseverance over several years.

*(Le génie a, pour ainsi dire, les bras liés dans un Artisan, dont la main n'est pas dénoïée. Il en est de l'œil comme de la main [ . . . ] Si l'imagination n'a pas à sa disposition une main & un œil capables de la seconder à son gré, il ne résulte des plus belles idées qu'enfante l'imagination, qu'un tableau grossier, & que dédaigne l'Artisan même qui l'a peint, tant il trouve l'œuvre de sa main au-dessous de l'œuvre de son esprit. L'étude nécessaire pour perfectionner l'œil & la main, ne se fait point en donnant quelques heures distraites à un travail interrompu. Cette étude demande une attention entière & une persévérance continuée durant plusieurs années.)*

(Du Bos, 1740, p. 92–94)

### The Painter and the Art Lover

In addition to the discretion, modesty, absence of boastfulness and politeness already mentioned, the modest acceptance of the criticisms of others as a means of correcting themselves, not seeking excuses for one's own faults and trusting the judgment of others, either friend or enemy, painter or not, was raised up to the rank of rule that governed the relationships that the painter had to maintain with his patron or art lover. The remarks on the manner in which the painter judged his own works were common, and completed the portrait of the painter outlined in the writings on art. Da Vinci was the first to insist on this point, which was essential in the construction of the link between the artist and his public. It was thanks to this "talent of the spirit [ . . . ] that they [the works] will give admiration and will attract the eyes



of everyone to contemplate them” (*talent d’esprit* [ . . . ] *qu’elles* [les œuvres] *donneront de l’admiration, & attireront les yeux d’un chacun à les contempler*, 1651, Chap. CCLXXIII, p. 89). He thus also gave recommendations and explained “how a painter must examine and judge his own work himself” (*comment un peintre doit examiner & juger luy-mesme de son propre ouvrage*, 1651, chap. CCLXXIV, p. 89–90). The idea of the painter deceived by his own judgment was taken up again by Sandrart (1675, p. 73) and developed by De Piles who qualified

as sovereign Arbitrer [ . . . ] a Painter fully versed in all Parts of Painting, in such a way that having placed himself above his Art, he is both Master and Sovereign: which is no small affair. Those of the Profession have so rarely this supreme capacity that there are few who can be good Judges of Works.

([d’]Arbitre souverain [ . . . ] un Peintre pleinement instruit de toutes les Parties de la Peinture; en sorte que s’estant mis comme au dessus de son Art, il en soit le Maître & le Souverain: ce qui n’est pas une petite affaire. Ceux de la Profession ont si rarement cette suprême capacité, qu’il s’en trouve bien peu qui puissent estre de bons Juges des Ouvrages.)

(1668, *Remarque 50*, p. 72)

Effectively, it was not enough to consider oneself as a painter to be esteemed. Acquiring a name, receiving praise and honour: this preoccupation appeared in most of the writings and was part of a much larger strategy. The importance given to painters in their relationship with the public was all the greater given that, as much in Germany as in England or the Netherlands, and doubtless in France too, it was necessary for them to constitute a clientele, to conform to their uses as much as educating their taste. The qualities of judgment, of the hand and of the spirit were recognised and were essential for providing the painter with the honour he deserved. Solidly based in the biographies of artists, the idea that the reputation of a painter could only be built from a reasonable life and virtuous behaviour thus justified the discourse on the moral qualities of the painter. However, this conception of the artist tended to disappear under the impulsion of a new conception of painting that had to please more than instruct, and of the painter who had become an artist.

Michèle-Caroline HECK

[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Armenini, 1587; Castiglione, 1528; Cathérinot, 1687; Da Vinci, 1651; De Piles, 1668, 1677, 1715; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Furst, 1656; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747; La Fontaine, 1679; Marsy, 1746; Pader, 1653 [1657]; Pline l'Ancien; Restout, 1681; Richardson, 1715 [1725]; Sanderson, 1658; Sandrart, 1675, 1679; Van Mander, 1604; Vasari, 1550/1568.

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## PAINTING

fr.: *peinture*  
 germ.: *Malerei, Maler-Kunst*  
 nl.: *schilderkunst*  
 it.: *pittura*  
 lat.: *pictura*

**Liberal art, imitation, subject, genre, drawing, part of painting, paragon, nobility, perfection**

*Using as his basis the writings of Da Vinci, Vasari, Fréart de Chambray, Félibien, De Piles, Coypel and Perrault, Marsy in his Dictionnaire portatif (1752) defined painting as a representation in colour, and he traced the origin of it. He also described in detail the various techniques, genres and*

parts of which it was composed (the composition, drawing and colouring), and then evoked its role in relation to drawing and the other arts. Although these generalities introduced almost all the texts devoted to this art, they nevertheless resonated with other questions on its origins and issues, thus considerably broadening its definition. Two directions were suggested. The first was stated firmly: painting must instruct, move, and please. The second was explicit in a letter from Poussin to Fréart de Chambray, dated 1 March 1665, “painting is an imitation made of lines and colours in a certain area of all that can be seen under the sun, its aim is delectation” (la peinture est une imitation faite de lignes et de couleurs en quelque superficie de tout ce qui se voit dessous le soleil, sa fin est delectation). Taken up at will by French theorists such as Félibien, Dupuy du Grez, both definitions often intermingled. In order to complete the questions about the art of painting, the aptitudes required were, for painters, a skilled mind, a capacity for observation, and continual work. But a vivid imagination, talent, or even genius, were qualities that were also often cited for the exercise of this art. Only the latter made it possible to attain perfection, and ennobled simultaneously painting and the painter.

### The Foundations of Painting

The definition of painting still often followed the tradition of the Italian Renaissance in its conception of drawing. It was thus not unusual to find associated with it the concept of prototype or image, assimilated with the universal idea, or the reference to a creation that imitated divine creation (Le Blond de la Tour, 1669, p. 4–7, 9–11; Pader, 1649, *Préface*, n.p.). This transfer from the conception of drawing to painting was also perceptible in Germany and the Netherlands, but added to the references to Antiquity in the form of more poetic evocations, based on mythology.

Its divine origin was recalled by Van Mander and its follow-up by Sandrart who, in order to insist on the role of light and colour, had it take its origin from Phoebus and Vulcan, that is, from the shadow of the sun and fire (1679, p. 9). This poetic tradition was also perpetuated by Hoogstraten who placed each part of painting under the aegis of the muses: proportion (Polyhymnia), the affects (Clio), ornament (Erato), order (Thalia), colour (Terpsichore), light and shade (Melpomene), and grace (Calliope) (1679, n.p.). On the other hand, the anecdotes on the origin of painting and drawing were developed little in the theoretical writings from the 17th century on.

The place for painting among the liberal arts was, on the other hand, still widely discussed, particularly in the Netherlands and England (Goeree, 1670, p. 81 recalling Junius; Hoogsraten, 1678, p. 89; Browne, 1675, n.p.; Peacham, 1661, p. 126). This common ground served in particular in France to confirm the two aspects of painting, one speculative and noble, the other mechanical (La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648, p. 97–98; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], *Préface*, n.p.), or contributed to insisting on the importance of the knowledge that the painter needed to acquire (Pader, 1649, n.p.).

### The Stakes Surrounding a Pictorial Representation

From the imitation of nature to the pleasure for the eyes, various characteristics were mentioned to define a painting. The most commonly cited recalled that this art was the representation of a figure or composition on a flat surface. But other theorists insisted on other qualities. The ability of a painting to reveal the soul of a man (Goeree, 1682, p. 338), its memory function (Pader, 1649, *Préface*, n.p.; Catherinot, 1687, p. 1), or even that of representing as much the past as the present through history, fables, or poetic or philosophical allegories (De Lairese, 1712, I, p. 172) were the most commonly cited.

The essential postulate governing painting was naturally imitation, and the writings on art articulated its definition very often, and very naturally, around this concept. Peacham clearly showed the essential aim by comparing painting to reading the wisdom of the Almighty Creator (1661, p. 125–126). However, the discourse was limited to determining the paths that the painter had to take in order to succeed thanks to proportion, movements, actions (Browne, 1675, p. 24, 47, 49), geometry and, in the context of natural philosophy (Browne, 1675, p. 25–26), colours. The attention to relief, attitude, colours and the expression of passions was essential for giving the impression of three dimensionality of a painting, and succeeding in a natural rendering of the figures. The imitation of life also provoked a great deal of debate around the question of subject.

Certain theorists, in particular the French ones, instituted a hierarchy of genres which defined the qualities of painting. Despite devoting several chapters to minor genres such as still life, De Lairese also associated painting with noble subjects (1712, I, p. 171), while others on the contrary (though less numerous), such as Sanderson, undertook to deal with all subjects, in the name of imitation (1658, p. 1). While

*mimesis* was unanimously accepted in the definition of painting, it was nevertheless questioned and led to a paradox: “What is Painting? An imitation of visible objects. It has nothing real, nothing true, all of it is a phantom, and its perfection depends only on its resemblance with reality” (*Qu'est-ce que la Peinture? Une imitation des objets visibles. Elle n'a rien de réel, rien de vrai, tout est phantôme chez elle, & sa perfection ne dépend que de sa ressemblance avec la réalité*). The artificial nature was thus placed in opposition with nature, which was nevertheless the basis of painting (Batteux, 1746, p. 14, 16).

The imitation of nature and deception were effectively qualities that were recognised in all painting. Boileau had already presented this art as “imagined, pretended, copied, artificial” (*imaginé, feint, copié, artificiel*, 1674, p. 35). It was this that formed its essential nature in relation to nature (Batteux, 1746, p. 22). Junius had already used the term of phantom for the eyes (*een enckel ooghenspoocksel*) to qualify a good painting (1641, p. 43). Effectively, all the northern theorists were in agreement regarding this essential nature in the definition of the art of painting. The expressions used were various: rendering present, with truth, absent objects (De Lairese, 2, p. 71), bringing back to life things that have disappeared (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 25; Aglionby, 1685, n.p.; Félibien, 1666, *2<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 96), representing nature and deceiving the eyes by means of lines and colours (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 24; Goeree, 1670, p. 27). For De Piles, the aim of painting was not so much to convince the mind but rather to deceive the eyes (1699, p. 59–61; 1708, p. 347, 443). This deception had to be a seduction of the eyes (1684, p. 3). The French theorist thus introduced the concept of agreement into the definition of painting.

The pleasure of the eyes was not a new idea. Based on diversity, it had already been evoked by Van Mander, who compared a painting to a field of flowers, and the eyes to bees (1604, 32–33, fol. 18r<sup>o</sup>). For Pader, it was provoked by symmetry, movement, colours and light (1649, n.p.). For Dupuy du Grez or Florent Le Comte, it was linked to painting naturally (1699, p. 1; 1699–1700, I, p. 74–75). But even though the eyes were mentioned, the satisfaction was nevertheless that of the mind or reason, called out to by the subject, the idea of which had to be understood suddenly (Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 19–20; Félibien, 1685, *8<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 295). Touching the eyes more than the spirit, the pleasure that De Piles associated with painting was of another nature, perceptible in the definitions that he proposed of it. And these definitions brought about another vision of painting that

the effect should call to mind (1708, p. 4). The essential qualities of painting were thus to deceive agreeably, and to seize our senses (Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1752, I, p. III). And it thus became for Richardson a new language that made it possible to understand the soul (1719, p. 10–13, 40–43; 1725, p. 2–3).

### Explaining Painting: from Technique to the Different Parts

Many authors, including Sandrart, De Piles, Sanderson, and Aglionby, devoted long passages to describing the various techniques (fresco, oil painting, water colour, miniature, pastel), which all obeyed different objectives. This teaching was of use to painters and provided them with the necessary knowledge even if, as with frescos, the techniques were no longer used. Their aim was not to reveal their seniority or to make a history of it. Evoking these processes was used to show the experience of artists who thus appeared as models to be followed, and outlined the ideal portrait of a painter. But the mention of these various painting techniques also played a part in the artistic education of art lovers. This education became all the more necessary as the public became more varied, particularly in Germany, the Netherlands and England, and it was necessary to train their gaze.

Also inherent to the definition of painting was the concept of the parts of paintings, corresponding to two orientations. The first ordered a division between what came from the intellect and which came from practice, or between intellectual qualities from inspiration which nevertheless had to appear in practice, and for which Poussin (1594–1665) used the metaphor of the golden bough given to Aeneas by the Sibyl of Cumae (Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI, 146) on the one hand, and the parts which could be learned on the other hand (Félibien, 1666, *1<sup>er</sup> Entretien*, p. 45–46). The second referred to the transposition of a unique idea into a pictorial form composed of different elements or parts: each one was subject to rules, the aim of which was to provide the work with the coherence that it possessed before being transposed to the canvas.

The concept of the parts of painting was an old one, dating back to Alberti (*De Pictura*, II, no. 30, 31, 35, 39, 46, 47, 50) but did not always refer to the same thing. Da Vinci, in his *Traitté* translated and edited in France in 1651, proposed a distinction between the line or outline that made it possible to distinguish the figure, and colours (Vinci, 1651, chap. XLVII, p. 12). In their effort to rationalise the definition of painting, and their teaching within the *Académie*, the French theorists

provided different definitions. In the academic context, Fréart differentiated the spiritual aspect of painting from the mechanical part (1662, p. 84). He attributed to the former the invention, the expression and the *costume* (decorum); the second concerned proportion, colouring, and the delineation of perspective. Félibien cited two “sovereign qualities” (*souveraines qualities*) in Painting: “one works with science to instruct, and the other paints agreeably in order to please” (*l’une de travailler avec science pour instruire, & l’autre de peindre agreablement pour plaire*, Félibien, 1685, 9<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 6–7). Taking Italian theory as his basis, he returned to the idea of the three-way division between composition, drawing and colouring:

There are three things to take into consideration; namely Composition, Drawing and Colouring, which all depend on reasoning, and the execution, which one calls Theory and Practice; reasoning is like the Father of Painting and execution like the Mother.

(*Il y a trois choses à considerer; sçavoir la Composition, le Dessein, & le Coloris, qui toutes trois dépendent du raisonnement, & de l’execution, ce qu’on nomme la Theorie, & la Pratique; le raisonnement est comme le Pere de la Peinture, & l’execution comme la Mere.*)

(Félibien, 1676, p. 392–393)

Although the distribution between theory and practice remained essential, with one supporting the other, the tripartition of composition, drawing and colouring was less present in the theoretical writings in the other countries north of the Alps. It nevertheless remained very present in French artistic literature, despite undergoing a few adjustments. Following on from Junius’ rhetorical model (Livre III), Fréart proposed five parts: invention “or the genius of illustrating a history and conceiving a beautiful idea on the subject” (*ou génie d’historier et de concevoir une belle idée sur le sujet*), proportion or “symmetry or correspondence of the Whole with its parts” (*symmetrie ou correspondance du Tout avec ses parties*), colour “the science of light and shade” (*science de l’ombre et de la lumière*) associated with perspective, movements or expression and the regular position of the figures or collocation. However, where Junius associated grace with all the parts and concluded his discourse with this idea, Fréart conceived his around the concept of convenience or decorum (*costume* in Italian), which he considered to be the “Master of Painting” (*Magistère de la Peinture*, 1662, p. 11–17). Perrault distinguished three things in painting: “the representation of figures, the expression of passions, and the composi-

tion of the whole-together” (*la representation des figures, l’expression des passions, & la composition du tout ensemble*, 1688, p. 209–210). From this notion of parts in painting were articulated in fact two different discourses. The first tended to differentiate theory and practice, which nevertheless remained intricately linked in a proposition whose aims were more pedagogical than theoretical. The second defined the codes and rules to be respected by the painter, and which were just as much indications for the spectator in how to read the painting.

### Painting and Drawing

The respective places given to drawing and colour played a particular, and dominant, role in the definitions of painting. Based on the anecdotes on the origins of painting, which was a simple contour that was traced from shadows, Goeree, citing Philostrates, considered that a drawing with light and shade, but no colour, deserved to be qualified as painting (1670b, p. 7). The debate focused on the specific merits of one or the other. Referring directly to Vasari, Van Mander considered drawing to be the nursemaid of all arts (1604, fol. 8r). It was called the “soul of painting” (*Ziel van de Schilder-Konst*) by Goeree (1670a, p. 6–7); Testelin saw it as the master and driver (s.d. [1693–1694], p. 36–37). This position, which tended to identify drawing with painting, remained common in the 17th century, particularly in the academic milieu in France, but it was then based more on a pedagogical perspective for learning painting than on theory. The debate still focused on the pre-eminence of one or the other, and the question of the subject then supplanted that of drawing, even if Dezallier, paraphrasing Vasari, returned once again to the idea that painting and sculpture were the two daughters of drawing (Dezallier, 1745–1752, I, p. 1). Although he defended the role of colour, that of drawing remained important for all theorists. In France, De Piles continued to recognise the importance of the line, but “in Painting, one does not paint to draw; but one does draw to paint” (*dans la Peinture on ne peint pas pour dessiner; mais on doit dessiner pour peindre*, 1684, p. 6). Similarly, Hoogstraten compared drawing with the foundations of which painting would be the building, to show that one needed the other (1678, p. 217), before adding that only colour could render things visible (1678, p. 217). Sandrart also included in his definition of painting the fact that colour had to support the drawing, and returned to the comparison of the soul and the body. But he inverted



the proposition, making colour the soul of painting which alone would bring to life the dead lines (*durch die Farben/ selbe todte Risse/ lebendig gemacht werden müssen*, 1679, p. 17).

### Paragone

The *Paragon* or comparison of the respective merits of the arts was a literary exercise in which a great number of theorists participated. It developed in two ways, and concerned either the relationship between painting and sculpture, or that between the arts related to sight and those related to hearing (poetry), giving rise to what we refer to as the doctrine of *Ut pictura poesis* (a poem is like a painting) to use Horace's expression. The confrontations between painting and sculpture, and between painting and poetry, continued to enter most naturally and very often into the definitions of painting.

The first comparisons between painting and sculpture were found in Alberti's *De Pictura* (1435). Leonardo Da Vinci introduced new terms into the reflections, placing painting not only above sculpture, but even at the very summit of human activity. Although his *Traitté* published in 1651 omitted all Da Vinci's writings on the *paragon*, the arguments used by the Italian theorist were repeated to by many artists. The debate had not died out in the 17th century. It had then left the purely theoretical or literary field, and touched on the notions of pictorial and sculptural rendering, volume and space, all essential for analysing and appreciating works of art in the Netherlands (Angel, 1642, p. 23–24; Goeree, 1670, p. 22–23) or England (Browne, 1675, p. 26–27; Aglionby, 1685, n.p.; Smith, 1692, p. 1–2, 10; Bell, 1730, p. 2–5). In Sandrart's introduction to the book on sculpture (*Teutsche Academie*, 1675, p. 1–5), he returned to the arguments given by Vasari so as to better refute them. It was not a question of archaism or the gratuitous repetition of an old dispute that had become a pastime in the 16th century. The *paragon* was placed from another perspective. Instead of the primacy of one or other of these arts, the German theorist concluded that there was equality between painting and sculpture—lively and natural twin sisters. It was effectively a reconciliation that he proposed in his discourse.

In France, within the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, there also appeared a new *paragon* which illustrated these ambiguous relations, in the classical period, between painting and sculpture. While the latter played a fundamental role in acquiring the practice and formation of taste, a profound change took place with Roger De Piles.

Sculptures and the ancient ideal were used less as references, and the autonomy of painting was thus on the contrary affirmed. The *paragon* became, as Jacqueline Lichtenstein demonstrated so well in *La Tache aveugle* (Paris, 2004), a theoretical issue for the Ancients and Moderns: sculpture and drawing being the prerogative of the Ancients, and painting and colouring that of the Moderns.

Putting painting and poetry in parallel with one another was fundamental because it had, since the Renaissance, served to bring legitimacy to painting as a liberal art, both socially and theoretically. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the need to raise the painter up to the rank of poet or orator, and to base the primacy of history painting by applying to it the categories of poetry such as invention, disposition and elocution, continued to be affirmed. And Horace's adage, "Poetry is a speaking picture, painting a silent poetry" (*Poema pictura loquens, pictura poema silens*) was repeated by many theorists in France, Germany, the Netherlands and England. Although some authors affirmed the pre-eminence of painting, most nevertheless considered them to be sisters (Dufresnoy / De Piles, 1668, p. 3), or brothers (Baillet de Saint-Julien, 1750, p. 8–9; Fréart, 1662, p. 9; Testelin, s.d., [1693 or 1694], p. 21). Behind this rather conventional discourse, the arguments given played a part in better defining painting however. Both came from the imagination (Junius, 1641, p. 4849). It was also a single genius who created painting with drawing and colour, and poetry through fable and versification (Batteux, 1746, p. 247). There was nevertheless no systematic assimilation between the two arts, and De Piles considered the force of the pleasure procured by painting which could multiply the episodes in different paintings, while recognising that painting could not bring to life the links, unlike poetry (1708, p. 449–450, 453). It was nevertheless through their respective efforts that the essential quality of a painter was best revealed. As a silent work, it penetrated the intimate movements of our soul (*dringht soo diep in de binnenste beweginghen onses ghemoedts*), and thus went beyond the powers of eloquence (Junius, 1641, p. 44), under the effect of pleasant astonishment (*een aenghenaeme verwonderingh*), and under the effect of *vraisemblance* (Junius, 1641, p. 42). For Richardson, it had the supreme power to communicate ideas:

Thus History begins, Poetry raises higher, not by Embellishing the Story, but by Additions purely Poetical: Sculpture goes yet farther, and Painting Completes and Perfects, and That only can; and here ends, This is the utmost Limits of Humane power in the Communication of Ideas. (1719, p. 35)

## Nobility and Perfection

Two essential characteristics were mentioned to demonstrate the nobility of painting, qualified as the “noble art of painting” (*noble art de peinture*) in most texts. This nobility was anchored in the origin that was attributed to it, that is, in its history, and elsewhere in the social changes that had changed the vision of art and artists since the Renaissance, and which intensified in the 17th century. Above all, painting was noble because it was the daughter of reason. Sandrart recalled Ancient Greece, during which painting figured among the liberal arts (1675, I, 3, p. 55). Its nobility was thus affirmed because this act of creation was assimilated to a virtue by the Ancients (Smith, 1692, p. 4–5), and was thus honoured by the great minds, according to the principle that the nobility of the art lover spilled over on to that of the painter. This common ground continued to be diffused in almost all writings on art, but another perception of art somewhat inflected the discourse. This perception was based on the parallel that had already been suggested by Dolce and other theorists from the Renaissance between the nobility of painting and that of the subject. Thus the concept of nobility that one applied to painting in general was demolished for subjects, such as the *Bamboccianti* artists for example, to whom this quality could not be attributed (De Lairese, 1707, I, p. 170–171). Similarly, the idea emerged that the greatness of art declined when the love of money replaced the love of art (Goeree, 1670a, p. 9). Driven by these various factors—subjects that were then qualified as drolleries, a profound change in the tastes of art lovers, and the new role played by the art market—the qualification of “noble art of painting” (*noble art de la peinture*), until then a common occurrence in the writings on art, tended to disappear from all discourse.

Just as the search for perfection was the aim of painters and academies, similarly this quality was ultimately always mentioned in the definitions of painting. Although it was always impossible to attain, the paths leading to it were described. The most commonly cited was the one associating theory and practice (Sandrart, 1679, p. 11). All theorists agreed to recognise the need to follow rules. It was to a “mass of precepts” (*un amas de precepts*) that Perrault attributed progress and perfection in painting (1688, t. 1, p. 234). It was nevertheless necessary to recognise that the perfection of a painting went beyond the strict observation of these maxims, sometimes held up as a method. It lay more in the genius or talent of the painter and in his

ability to conform to the principle of decency which was, for Fréart, “everything that Painting has that is ingenious and sublime” (*tout ce que la Peinture a d’ingenieux & de sublime*) or what De Lairese called *deftigheid en welgemanierdheid*, the soul of painting, providing it with perfection rather than ornaments (Fréart, 1662, p. 133; De Lairese, 1712, I, p. 57). Supplanting the role of drawing, the perfection of painting thus lay in the distribution, and variety of colour (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 21; De Lairese, 1712, I, p. 38, 205, 207). Beauty and imitation were frequently associated with define perfection (Félibien, 1688, *10<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 295; Testelin, s.d. [1693–1694], p. 40).

The notions of facility, the immediacy of perception, and pleasure were still mentioned by Richardson (1719, p. 10–13, 17–18), but it was nevertheless necessary to observe that the need to define painting was no longer of real concern to the theorists, given that they were more interested in talking about effect.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Aglionby, 1685; Alberti, 1435 [1540]; Angel, 1642; Baillet De Saint-Julien, 1750; Batteux, 1746; Bell, 1728; Boileau, 1674 b; Browne, 1669 [1675]; Cathérinot, 1687; Coypel, 1721; Da Vinci, 1651; De Lairese, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1684, 1699; Dezallier d’Argenville, 1745–1752; Dolce, 1557; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; Goeree, 1670 a, 1682; Hoogstraten, 1678; La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648; Le Blond De La Tour, 1669; Le Comte, 1699–1700; Marsy, 1746; Pader, 1649; Peacham, 1661; Perrault, 1688–1697; Richardson, 1715 [1725], 1719; Sanderson, 1658; Sandrart, 1675 et 1679; Smith, 1692; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Van Mander, 1604; Vasari, 1550/1568.

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Palette ⇒ Handling  
 Paragon ⇒ Fine arts, Painting  
 Parergon ⇒ Ornament  
 Part of painting ⇒ Composition, Invention, Invention, Painting  
 Pattern ⇒ Copy/Original  
 Perfection ⇒ Antiquity, Grace, Masterpiece, Painting, School  
 Perspective ⇒ Air, Landscape, *Reddering*  
 Physiongnomy ⇒ Air, Countenance  
 Pinacotheca ⇒ Gallery

## PLEASURE

fr.: *plaisir*  
 germ.: *Vergnügen, Lust*  
 nl.: *playsantie, vermaak*  
 it.: *piacere, diletto, contento*  
 lat.: *delectatio*

**Delight, agreement, satisfaction, eye, gaze, sentiment, taste, imitation, deceit, illusion**

*In conformity with the stakes of rhetoric defined by Quintilian (Institutio oratores, 12, 10, 59) and repeated by all art theorists since Alberti, to the point of becoming commonplace, to please (delectare, placere) was inherent to the definition of painting alongside docere (to instruct) and movere (to move), just as pleasure was for the contemplation of a painting. Pleasing all men of different tastes was thus held up as the definition of the universal painter by Da Vinci (1651, chap. X, p. 3). Pleasure is natural. However, it was defined differently depending on whether the theorists evoked that of the senses or that of the mind. Nevertheless, one can but affirm that the vocabulary was completely fixed between délectation (more appropriate for defining aesthetic enjoyment) and plaisir (more in the field of sensation) in*

*French, and between delight and pleasure in English. The same ambiguity covered the meanings of diletto, Lust and Vergnügen. And the terms were often used indifferently to express the nuances, without it being possible to base oneself on their meanings to define them, and above all to specify their fields of application. But, by analysing the mechanisms of this, the texts shed light, particularly in France and England, on the role and function of the perception of a painting.*

### Imitation, Deception: the Pleasure of Illusion

The definition of painting as an imitation made with lines and colours and “whose aim is delight”, (*dont la fin est delectation*) given by Poussin (1594–1665) and transcribed by Félibien (1685, *8<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 309–310), was often repeated by theorists. Batteux also affirmed that the aim of Art was imitation and that the goal of it was *pleasure* (1746, p. 79–80). All these approaches to the definition of painting were made in the context with the comparison with the other arts, and poetry in particular. Seeking to differentiate painting from the other arts, Testelin associated imitation, deception through colour, and pleasure. He nevertheless put things into perspective regarding the power of colour to please those who were ignorant, and insisted on the need to deceive, which he held up as a sign of perfection when the same effect was also made on those who were learned (s.d. [1693 ou 1694], p. 35–36).

Illusion as a source of delight was a question that was widely debated. Du Bos gave a very clear response, affirming that pleasure continues when the surprise has passed, and a painting pleases when the mind knows that the perception is of a canvas on which the colours have been disposed artfully (1740, p. 424–425). There were two elements underlying this discourse: what is represented, and how it is represented. The subject thus played an essential role, inflecting taste in a new direction. What pleased was thus what moved, that is, a history in which the spectator could recognise himself. Illusion was no longer the only remit of pleasure, it was supplanted by the emotion that emanated particularly from simple subjects (Baillet de Saint-Julien), with which the spectator could identify. Furthermore, the debate went beyond that of drawing and colouring, and opened out on to the development of the coloured space of a painting.

### Pleasure of the Spectator, Pleasure of the Painter

The eyes effectively want to be surprised (Le Comte, 1699–1700, p. 76–77). Taking the example of ancient sculpture, De Piles showed that it was also sight that gave the connoisseur the greatest pleasure (1708, p. 475). But the question of the need to know the principles of art in order to feel pleasure was raised by Coypel (*Discours*, 1732, p. 22). Study and knowledge also played a part in delight. They even intensified it and provided even greater pleasure in the contemplation of a work of art. However, because painting was based on imitation and the representation of truth, it also acted on all those with a gifted mind or inhabited by an *inner sentiment* (*sentiment intérieur*) that meant that the spectator did not know the rules of the painting but could nevertheless be seduced by it.

Another virtue of the spectator's pleasure was to allow him to participate in the *enthusiasm* of the painter who created the works (Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1752, I, p. II). De Piles and other theorists described the painter's pleasure when he conceived the painting "that had to be painted in the head before being painted on the canvas" (*qui doit être peint dans la teste avant que de l'estre sur la toile*, 1668, *Remarque 78*, p. 83–85), that is, when he painted and put down on canvas all that was a copy of what he had imagined, that is the groups, backgrounds, *chiaroscuro*, harmony of the subject and the intelligence of the subject (1668, *Remarque 442*, p. 142–143, returned to in the article *Effet* in the *Encyclopédie*, by Watelet). The painter thus found joy in the practice and execution of his painting, including the use of mannequins or models to see the effect of a composition (perspective, position of the characters, light) (De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 219*, p. 110–111). Pleasure was thus associated with facility.

### The pleasure of Reason, Pleasure for the Eyes, and Perfection

Just as pleasure could unite the experience of the painter with that of the spectator, it could also bring into agreement the senses and the mind.

The pleasure was all the greater when the painting represented agreeable things (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 1) or imitated *Beautiful Nature* (*Belle Nature*, Batteux, 1746, p. 79–80), or more simply went beyond reality (Du Bos, 1740, p. 28). But it could also be provoked by terror (Pader, *Plan ou Dessein*, s.d., p. 3). The delight thus came from

the distance in relation to what was shown in the painting. However, a topic imposed itself, essentially in the Netherlands and in the writings of Roger De Piles. The term *pleasure* was used frequently in relation to what touched on the representation of nature, countryside (De Piles, 1708, p. 200), flowers (Boutet, 1696, p. 8385), or fruits (Goeree, 1670a, p. 51–52). More generally, *playsantie* was associated with the pictorial transposition of nature (*schilderachtigh*) (Goeree, 1670a, p. 21). The pleasure thus came from the presence of what was absent. However, as proposed by Junius on several occasions, followed by many subsequent theorists, it was not a question of copying slavishly, but rather of capturing the inner force that animates nature, for this was the source of delight (Junius, 1641, I, III.8). The latter was also generated by the sight of a beautiful painting, because the painter had known, thanks to the colours and light, how to make the figures seem alive through their movement (Pader, 1649, *Préface*, n.p.). What pleased was thus variety, diversity and facility, animated by a heavenly fire for De Piles (Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668, p. 44), or novelty for De Lairese (1712, I, p. 111–113) who repeated the comments of Da Vinci literally (1651, chap. LXXXXVII, p. 31).

Whereas the senses and reason were often opposed, the aim of painters was to bring pleasure to the eyes, associated with that of the mind, which some called an eye endowed with reason (*ein vernünftiges Auge*). Certain parts of painting thus focused as much on sight as on reason. This was the case for drawing, the harmony of the parts, the sharpness (Sandrart, 1675, p. 61 et 72), the decency of the proportions (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 87–89), and the symmetry (De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 145*, p. 98) which were pleasant (*gefällig*) for Sandrart (1679, p. 13–14). Browne devoted a chapter to the virtues and praise of proportion and the pleasure it gave (1675, p. 1). Gradually, the discourse changed and pleasure became associated with colour, and affected both, how they were handled and the need to know their nature in order to render them pleasantly (Goeree, 1670a, p. 96), and their effect. The harmony of colours thus occupied an increasingly important place. For De Piles, only the pleasure created by the *œconomie* of the whole-together deceived the eyes (1668, *Remarque 78*, p. 83–85). The effect of colouring gave Richardson the very highest degree of pleasure (1719, p. 67). It was also that with which beauty and pleasure were associated (Richardson, 1719, p. 88–90). More than the subject or the history, the whole-together of the colours that needed to be gazed upon from afar was “delightfull for the eyes” (p. 53–54). The



painter's ability to give the spectator pleasure was even held up as the ultimate quality for Du Bos, for whom the greatest painter was he who gave the greatest pleasure (1740, p. 476–477).

On the other hand, Du Bos raised the question of knowing whether the pleasure was enough to prove the excellence of the work. He was not thus questioning the quality of the pleasure, nor like De Piles what Boileau called “the remit” (*les ressorts*) that is, the precepts that had the power to arouse sentiment in the spectator (Boileau, 1674, *Art poétique*, chant III, v. 23–26). He was placing himself in the perspective of a reflection on the nature of the public. As pleasure and displeasure were linked to perception, even an ignorant person could judge whether or not a painting pleased him, without necessarily being able to justify his impression (Du Bos, 1740, p. 289). The theory of art took more and more into account the experience of sensitivity and the authority of sentiment. It was however not yet possible to speak of a conception of experience and sensitive knowledge similar to aesthetics. This point was the subject of debate in the second half of the 18th century.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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## PORTRAIT

fr.: *portrait*  
 germ.: *Porträt*  
 nl.: *conterfeytsel, afbeeldsel*  
 it.: *ritratto*  
 lat.: *effigies*

**Face painting, portrait painting, portraiture, portraitist, portrait painter, face painter, portrait (to), resemblance, carnation, attitude, drapery, figure**

*The ideas of natural, life and ideal were, from the Renaissance on, attached to the portrait. These ideas remained at the heart of the writings on art in the modern era, but other preoccupations became major issues: faithful representation of the model and practice. Creating a portrait interested theoreticians, who provided precise recommendations regarding the sitting session, the colours, the rendering of the drapery or the human body. New reflections appeared in the mid-17th century, and during the Enlightenment. The ambiguities of the pictorial genre, between faithfulness, embellishment, grace and convenience, were then underlined with the aim of showing detractors that it was not simply a question of copying nature, but that a variety of types of knowledge was required, as well as real talent.*

### Resemblance between the Natural and the Ideal

In the modern era, it was expected that a portrait offer a faithful image of a particular individual that the spectator should be able to recognise (Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668, p. 40; Leblond de la Tour, 1669, p. 75; Chambers, 1728, II, p. 848). In this, it was different from other representations of human figures—academies, historic or genre paintings—where no resemblance was required. This theme occupied a non-negligible place in the artistic literature on portraits. It was first defined as a realistic transcription of the face (Aglionby, 1685, p. 111–113; Pernety, 1757, p. 502), a notion on which the English term *face painting* insisted. It was also a faithful representation of the whole body (Tocqué, “Sur la peinture et le genre du portrait” [1750], in *Conférences de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, t. V, vol. 2, 2012, p. 460). The head, hands or even the torso had to be a true image of the model. Resemblance also included a transcription of character and expression (De Piles, 1668, *Remarques 393*, p. 137;

included in La Fontaine, 1679, p. 11–14 and Marsy, 1746, t. II, p. 124). The commonly cited examples were those of a rather sad person who should not be painted smiling, or the opposite, as it would not be in conformity with his nature, or giving a happy air to someone of a rather melancholy nature (Aglionby, 1685, p. 111–113). The best thing was thus to know one's subject and his or her temperament well (De Lairese, 1712, p. 11–12; Richardson, 1725 [1715], p. 22).

However, the principle of resemblance did not prevent certain imperfections from being dissimulated. The debate between reproducing or embellishing the model had been recurrent since Antiquity. Junius, when reporting the words of Plutarch, explained for example that it was not necessary to accentuate the physical defects, nor to ignore them, as in both cases the portrait would either not bear any resemblance or would be ugly (1641, p. 225–226). In turn, Goeree recommended flattering those who wished to see themselves as more attractive than they were in reality, but in a natural, unostentatious manner (1670, p. 122–123). This concerned as much the face as the attitude of the person. The painter could arrange his subject in a position that put him to his advantage, or make use of shadows to hide imperfections, and this would procure him the admiration of his patrons. De Piles, who devoted an entire chapter to the portrait in his *Cours de peinture*, authorised some liberties if the patron demanded it. It was acceptable to dissimulate or ignore the physical defects for women and young men, who preferred “less resemblance and more beauty” (*moins de ressemblance et plus de beauté*), and thus discreetly straighten a bent nose or adjust the shoulders (1708, p. 268–271). The subject nevertheless needed to remain individualised and not have the same “general air” (*air général*) that could be found elsewhere (1708, p. 270). It was recommended on the contrary to remain as faithful as possible in the representations of people of high social rank or with a particular merit. These works, essentially formal portraits, were destined for posterity and effectively played a role of memory. Although De Piles spoke of two types of portrait, without qualifying them, it is nevertheless possible to follow the distinction made by E. Pommier between memorial and fashionable portraits, with each defining different expectations (E. Pommier, 1998, p. 285). Richardson's position was different. According to him, a portraitist should know how to elevate the character of the model in all cases, without painting a young, attractive face even if that was the desire of the patron (1725 [1715], p. 185–187). It was nevertheless possible to discreetly diminish an

imperfection. The theoretician gave the example of Van Dyck's *Portrait of the Countess of Exeter*, on whose forehead a gauze veil is placed to skillfully hide her lack of eyebrows (missing work, known through an engraving by Faithorne, 1650–1663, British Museum). By means of this artifice, Van Dyck preserved the resemblance, whilst also conferring the appropriate grace and grandeur. This is evidence of evolution in the conception of the portrait, which tempers the relationship between resemblance and the natural, by bringing convenience into play. For his part, Tocqué was opposed to any form of embellishment in the name of grace. For him, it was true that modifying even the smallest detail resulted in a loss of resemblance. But above all he introduced the idea that, as defects are subjective, it was better to represent models as they were and not according to the ideals of the time. The art of the portrait effectively consisted more in capturing “happy times” and “favourable moments” (*instants heureux* and *moments favorables*) when grace appeared on the face (“*Sur la peinture et le genre du portrait*” [1750], in *Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, t. V, vol. 2, 2012, p. 454–456).

It was also the impression of life that Tocqué highlighted in the two portraits of Rigaud (*Mignard*, 1691, musée national des châteaux de Versailles et Trianon; *Desjardins*, 1692, musée du Louvre). The idea of a living portrait, common since Vasari, thus revealed in the authors of the 18th century another conception of painting. It was in particular associated with the illusion produced by the work: “they create an illusion, I feel like I am in conversation with those who are represented, I see the canvas that seems to breathe [ . . . ], I believe I can see the blood circulating under their skin” (*ils me font illusion, c'est que je crois être en conversation avec ceux qu'ils me représentent, je vois la toile qui semble respirer [ . . . ], je crois apercevoir le sang qui circule sous la peau*) (Tocqué, “*Sur la peinture et le genre du portrait*” [1750], in *Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, t. V, vol. 2, 2012, p. 457 et 460). This illusion, admired by other theoreticians (Le Blanc, 1753, p. 36; Diderot, *Salon de 1759*, in Diderot, 1996, p. 200; Nonnotte, “*Discours sur les avantages du portrait et la manière de le traiter*” [1760], in A. Perrin Khelissa, 2011, p. 315 and 318), highlighted the talent of the portraitist and the admirable effect of the work that surprised and seduced the viewers.

### Creating a Portrait

Painting and successfully producing a portrait were similarly notable preoccupations for theoreticians, who thus provided a large number of recommendations. Non-negligible attention was thus given to these practices in the treatises published in the 17th and early 18th century, particularly in England, where the portrait occupied a privileged position. Various authors, including Peacham (1634, p. 21–25; 1661, p. 132–133) and Salmon (1672, p. 11–15), paid particular attention to the face, and explained exactly how to draw it according to its position. Alongside this, the proportions and anatomy also played an important role (Shaftesbury, 1914, p. 134; Page, 1720, p. 75). In the Netherlands, without giving the face quite as much importance, Van Hoogstraten and Goeree noted that it was necessary to know how to put the different parts of the body together harmoniously (Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 44; Goeree, 1682, p. 15–16). Other practical elements were covered in the texts on theory in France, such as the choice of attitude, the importance of which was highlighted by De Piles. Considered to be “the language” (*le langage*) of portraits, the attitude was one of the four things necessary for perfection in this type of work, along with air, colouring and adjustments (1708, p. 277–282). De Piles’ discourse then turned to ways of dealing with rest and movement, as well as avoiding affected positions (which were often criticised), allowing the model to take up position alone during the sitting sessions.

How the sittings went was generally described precisely and taken from one author to another without any major changes. The number was often taken up to three, as in Sanderson’s *Graphice* (1658, p. 62–69), the anonymous work *The Excellency of the Pen and Pencil* (1688, p. 100–102), De Piles’ *Cours de peinture* (1708, p. 285–297) or Page’s *Art of Painting* (1720, p. 75–85). The first session was used to sketch the body. Dufresnoy explained that it was recommended that the parts in pairs—eyes, cheeks, ears—be dealt with at the same time so as to imitate nature as faithfully as possible and to bring the work to life as necessary (Dufresnoy, 1668, p. 40; repeated in Marsy, 1746, t. I, p. 124). It was necessary to draw carefully, dealing with them together. During this encounter, the first layer of colour was also placed on the support (Sanderson, 1658, p. 63). During the second session, the artist verified the disposition of his composition. It was also necessary to ensure that the colours used were adapted to the subject and produced the desired effect (De Piles, 1708, p. 288). For

this reason, the carnation had to correspond to that of the person portrayed, and his or her age and gender (Boutet, 1696 [1672], p. 55–59; Browne, 1676, p. 31). Finally, the last session made it possible to perfect the painting and concentrate on the resemblance (Sanderson, 1658, p. 67; De Piles, 1708, p. 290). The portraitist had to return to his model with a new regard, and verify that he had represented him or her correctly, respecting the traits and character (Watelet, Levesque, 1792, t. V, p. 150). This third encounter ultimately made it possible to assemble and harmonise the composition.

Furthermore, the sittings, which took place more often than not in the painter's studio, were a key moment for the success of the work, which was dependent on both parts. The portraitist had to make his models feel comfortable, and converse with them, so that they did not get bored, as this would be visible on their faces and spoil the work. Similarly, he had to take the time to observe his subjects scrupulously. The subjects also needed to involve themselves in the process, although this was not always easy. The sittings, which sometimes lasted up to six hours (Sanderson, 1658, p. 65), could effectively be long. Félibien (*2<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, 1666, p. 224) thus recommended that the portraitist start up a conversation, or hire musicians for his studio as Leonardo da Vinci is said to have done when painting his *Mona Lisa* (c. 1503–1519, Musée du Louvre). Similarly, De Lairese advised artists to not tell unpleasant or tragic stories as this would result in the models adopting a sad or displeased air that they would not have naturally (De Lairese, 1712, vol. 2, p. 11–12).

The background was also the subject of particular treatment by certain authors. Boutet notably recommended choosing colours that highlighted the subject (1696 [1672], p. 26). For his part, De Lairese criticised the permanent use of black and dark, or white and clear backgrounds as they did not necessarily result in a good effect. He recommended choosing a colour that created harmony with the model, his or her skin tone and the drapery (De Lairese, 1712, p. 22–23).

### Between Denouncing and Legitimising the Portrait

The hierarchy of pictorial genres, inherited from Antiquity and theorised notably by the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture* in Paris during the 17th century, placed the portrait after history painting and allegories, partly because of the greater difficulty of the latter (Félibien, “Préface”, 1668, n.p.). The history painter was generally

perceived as the only accomplished artist because he was interested in all subjects and had more imagination and talent than the others. Thus, for Shaftesbury, the portrait was mechanical and vulgar, and could not be assimilated with a liberal art (1914 [written in 1712], p. 135). This pictorial genre, despite the considerable knowledge needed and the talent required, was thus often considered as a copy of an individual, subject to nature, whereas history painting, with its vocation to educate the public, required varied knowledge, pictorial mastery and superior genius. However, the instructive aim of art was not only achieved by history painting, as portraits made it possible to immortalise the artist and to transmit down through posterity the image of men of merit whose example should be followed (Félibien, 7<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, 1685, p. 144–145; Catherinot, 1687, p. 11). The viewer was thus invited to reflect on moral values, and committed to following the paths taken by these Great Men, just as he could be when facing history painting (Richardson, 1719, p. 45–46 et [1715] 1725, p. 13–14).

This hierarchy of genres was recognised little in the Netherlands and England, but was nevertheless relativised in the name of the quality of the work and the artist. Art lovers and artists effectively took to their quills to show that portraits were not as simple as they seemed. Félibien had already listed the considerable knowledge that had to be acquired, as well as the talent required, if one wanted to create works as commendable as those of Van Dyck, before highlighting all the difficulty of the work (7<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, 1685, p. 141–145). In turn, Richardson insisted on the genius of the portraitist, in such a way that the talent and knowledge required were similar to those of a painter of history, if not greater in terms of colouring ([1715] 1725, p. 21). Tocqué, in the first conference on the portrait given at the Académie Royale de Paris, explained that he had wanted to be a portraitist because he believed that he would not be able to excel in history painting, but confessed that he had made a mistake because each specialty had a certain number of difficulties “*lorsque l'on veut l'exercer de manière à se faire un nom*” (“Sur la peinture et le genre du portrait” [1750], in the *Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, t. V, vol. 2, 2012, p. 449–450). In addition, Massé recommended that the pupils of the Académie royale should not persist in being historic painters, but instead work with the talent that suited them as each specialty was worthy when the artist applied himself (“Examen qu'il faut faire pour connaître ses dispositions”, in *Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, t. V,

vol. 2, 2012, p. 468–469). A questioning of the hierarchy of genres emerged with Diderot, for whom each pictorial genre was composed of considerable difficulties. According to him, genre paintings and portraits, if they were produced by “a man of genius” (*un homme de génie*), could take on a pictorial value equal to that of history painting (Diderot, *Salon de 1763*, in Diderot, ed. 1996, p. 245–246; *Essais sur la peinture*, in Diderot, ed. 1996, p. 506–507). A portraitist focusing not only on transcribing the resemblance of his models, but on putting into place real action, had as great a talent as the historical painter. In addition, Diderot stressed the considerable difficulty of the portrait, which led historical painters to produce a reduced number, or even to produce “bad” ones (*Essais sur la peinture*, in Diderot, ed. 1996, p. 505; *Salon de 1767*, in Diderot, ed. 1996, p. 638).

Virulent denunciations of another genre were expressed, concerning both the patrons and the subjects of portraits. With portraits concerning a much wider range of social categories than before, they encountered great success in the 18th century, making the art more lucrative than history painting. For La Font de Saint-Yenne, this phenomenon was nothing more than the result of the decadence of art (1747, p. 21–23). Criticism, which did not question the utility of portraits, nevertheless attacked the vanity of the models, particularly the women who wore mythological disguises to present themselves in their best light, but who were often unrecognisable (1747, p. 23–27). These works effectively proposed a rather false and superficial vision which was of less interest for art lovers such as La Font de Saint-Yenne or Cochin; the latter even ridiculed them (1771, t. I, p. 152–154). Alongside the works with moral value that took the place of formal portraits, a new type, presenting the bust of the model and a limited number of accessories developed in parallel. This new style, created in particular by La Tour (1704–1788), seemed more authentic, natural or intimate, and focused on the psychology of the model, in conformity with the taste of the critics.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Aglionby, 1685; Anonyme, 1668 [1688]; Baillet De Saint-Julien, 1748; Boutet, 1696 [1672]; Browne, 1669 [1675]; Catherinot, 1687; Chambers, 1728; Cochin, 1757 [1771]; Conférences, [2006-2015]; De Piles, 1708; De Lairese,



1707 [1712]; Diderot, 1759, 1763, 1765, 1769; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Félibien, 1666–1688; Goeree, 1670 a, 1682; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747; La Fontaine, 1679; Le Blanc, 1753; Le Blond De La Tour, 1669; Marsy, 1746; Nonnotte, 1760; Page, 1720; Peacham, 1634, 1661; Pernetty, 1757; Richardson, 1715 [1725], 1719; Salmon, 1672; Sanderson, 1658; Shaftesbury, 1914; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1791.

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*Portrait chargé* ⇒ Portrait, Caricature  
 Posture ⇒ Attitude

## PRACTICE

fr.: *pratique*  
 germ.: *Praxis*  
 nl.: *praktijk*  
 it. : *pratica*  
 lat.: *techne*

**Manner, method, industry, dexterity, to make, hand, skill, rule, technique**

*Although the term technique is readily used today to refer to the ways artists used their bodies and materials to create their artworks, the word is a late eighteenth-century neologism in the vernacular. In the early modern period, what we now call technique was described with terms such as manner, method, practice, use, hand, skill, rule, and occasionally tèchne before ca. 1750. Only in the eighteenth century was the term technique first introduced in the vernacular to describe and evaluate the practical aspects of creating art, and it was not commonly used in this sense until well in the nineteenth century. (Hendriksen 2017, 2018, Taylor 2017) The shifts in the use of constellations of words with seemingly similar meanings like practice, manner, method, and technique tend to occur gradually rather than abrupt, and it can be difficult to pinpoint if and when an old meaning is entirely replaced by a new one.*

### Practice and the Origins of the Term “technique”

The term *art* is derived from the Latin *ars*, while the term *technique* comes from the Greek (Τέχνη). In antiquity, both had the same meaning and indicated not only the mastery acquired through the practice of a trade and the possession of related knowledge, but also the manual and intellectual productions of all types of human work (Francastel 1956). The modern distinction between art and technique as the intellectual and the practical aspect of the production of art forms a

sharp contrast with the ancient and pre-modern understanding of the terms. What we would now call artistic *technique*—a particular way of carrying out a practical procedure or task and handling materials to produce an art work—was mostly described with terms such as practice, manner, method, industry, dexterity, to make, hand, skill, and rule before the nineteenth century, and rarely discussed separately from the intellectual, spiritual or mental aspects of artmaking. To understand why the term “technique” was first introduced in art theory in the eighteenth century, it is important to note that there was no generally accepted hierarchical dichotomy between mind and hand in Renaissance art theory, which explains why no equivalent of the term “technique” existed. The artist’s ability to produce an artwork was rooted in the thoroughly interwoven combination of a trained mind and hand.

#### A Slowly Evolving Distinction between Mind and Hand

In late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century art theory and artisanal treatises, *practice* or *manner* and their equivalents almost always occur in cohesion with theory or an equivalent thereof. It was the way in which an artist combined mental skills, such as forming pictures in one’s mind, reasoning, the comprehension of theory such as rules about the depiction of costume, subject, history, and fables with the employment of materials, industry, dexterity, his hand, manners, or practice, through ingenuity, *esprit* or Genius into the formation of the work of art that determined the quality of the artwork. The establishment of art academies in the second half of the seventeenth century led to a new way of perceiving skills, talent, and how these could and should be developed. (De Munck, 2010) While these developments were reflected in a much sharper distinction between the mind and the hand in art theory and criticism, the two long remained inextricably connected, and there was no need yet to introduce the concept of technique.

We see this for example in André Félibien’s introduction to the *Conferences*, which are divided in a part on “Reasoning or Theory” (*raison ou théorie*) and a part on “Hand or Practice” (*main ou pratique*). Here, a subtle but clear hierarchy is identified between hand and mind, but all the same, the inextricable connection between them is acknowledged:

While this second part, which deals with the practice, is less noble than the first, it is important not to think that it should be considered as a purely mechanical part, because in Painting the hand never works unless it is driven by the imagination, without which it can almost never draw a single line nor give a successful brush stroke.

(Quoy que cette seconde partie qui traite de la pratique soit moins noble que la premiere, il ne faut pas neantmoins s'imaginer qu'elle doive estre considerée comme une partie purement mécanique, parce que dans la Peinture la main ne travaille jamais qu'elle ne soit conduite par l'imagination, sans laquelle elle ne peut presque faire un seul trait ny donner un coup de Pinceau qui réussisse.) (1668 [1669], n.p.)

No matter how much knowledge, imagination, and invention one possesses, it is useless if not combined with the ability to execute ideas, and vice versa:

So we should not be surprised that there are so few excellent Works, since not only naturally a fertile mind for beautiful inventions is needed, but also a solid judgment to use them properly, & a great practice to put them into a beautiful light.

(De sorte qu'il ne faut pas s'étonner s'il y a si peu d'excellens Ouvrages, puisque non seulement il faut avoir naturellement un esprit fertile pour les belles inventions, mais aussi un jugement solide pour s'en bien servir, & une grande pratique pour les mettre en un beau jour.)

(1668 [1669], n.p.)

*Esprit* in seventeenth-century French denoted individual identity grounded in both temperament and intellectual faculties. As Marr *et al.* have recently argued, and as becomes visible here, *esprit* came to stand for the social and artistic representation and performance of such individual identity, which subsequently became the object of interpretation and assessment. From these remarks in the *Conferences*, it appears though that in the case of painting, it was not just *esprit* that had to be assessed: it was only the combination of an excellent mind and an excellent hand that could produce a great work of art. The combination of what we might call the ingenuity and technique of the artist, and how it is reflected in the artwork, was the prime criterion for the appreciation and evaluation of art. The ability to recognize, understand and appreciate this combination in turn was what made a seventeenth-century *connoisseur*, someone who discerns, knows and understands great art, rather than just appreciates it. (De Piles, 1677, p. 26)

Some authors, such as Richardson, made a sharper distinction between mind and hand than others, defining the practical aspects of art-making as mechanical and craft-like:

Handling. By this Term is understood the manner in which the Colours are left by the Pencil upon the Picture; as the manner of using the Pen, Chalk, or Pencil in a Drawing is the Handling of that Drawing. This consider'd in it self abstractedly is only a piece of Mechanicks, and is Well, or Ill as 'tis perform'd with a Curious, Expert; or Heavy, Clumsey Hand; and that whether 'tis Smooth, or Rough, or however 'tis done; for all the Manners of Working the Pencil may be Well or Ill in their kind; and a fine light Hand is seen as much in a Rough, as in a Smooth manner. (Richardson 1725, p. 164–165)

However, most writers appear to have thought about mind and hand not as two strictly separate entities, but rather as a continuum of knowledge and skills, one unable to function without the other—both necessary but neither on its own sufficient for the successful creation of works of art. Opinions on how intellect and hand should be trained exactly varied. De Lairese's for example observed that the order in which intellectual and practical skills were acquired varied between visual disciplines; he wrote that

For Painters first teach the Theory, or Knowledge of Proportion, and then the Practice of Colouring; whereas many Engravers begin with the Practice or Handling (De Lairese, 1712, II, p. 379. Translation taken from De Lairese 1738, p. 636)

### Ways of Writing about Practice

Finally, it is important to note that in this period we can distinguish roughly two kinds of writing about the practical or technical aspects of visual art: first, to document or transmit them, for example in an artist handbook, and second, as a part of the evaluation and appreciation of art. By the eighteenth century, there was a long tradition of artist-theoreticians doing both, with the two genres regularly overlapping. Although there is a considerable corpus of so-called *artes*-literature that was aimed at the documentation and transmission of practical skills, this consists predominantly of manuscripts. Printed works in this genre are the exception and these were often aimed at amateur practitioners, such as Willem Beurs' *De groote Waereld* (1692). Most printed works in which artistic practices were discussed were primarily criti-

cally, evaluative, and theoretically focused works aimed at professional artists and their patrons. Overall, it can be said that the importance of the distinction in this period between the intellectual and spiritual characteristics of the artist and his practical, manual, or mechanical skills varies widely between authors, from inextricably interwoven to dismissal of the latter as of secondary importance for the creation and evaluation of art. Taylor (2017) has argued that the introduction of the term “technique” by Diderot in art theory and criticism in 1765 was aimed at giving aesthetic value to the practice of the visual artist—to argue that artistry had value in itself. However, the term did not gain serious traction until the early nineteenth century, when the reception of Kant’s theory of disinterested judgements of taste led to an almost complete rejection of the importance of the practical skills of the artist in the appreciation of art by some critics, and the introduction of a Romantic Genius-aesthetics (Hendriksen 2017).

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Precept  $\Rightarrow$  Rule  
 Principle  $\Rightarrow$  Rule  
 Print  $\Rightarrow$  Engraving  
 Proneness  $\Rightarrow$  Genius  
 Property  $\Rightarrow$  Convenience

## PRINT/ENGRAVING

## PROPORTION

fr.: *proportion*  
 germ.: *Proportion*  
 nl.: *proportie*  
 it.: *proporzione*  
 lat.: *proportio*

**Figure, body, part, measure, shortening, rule, fault, nature, harmony, eurhythm, symmetry, report, lineament, contour, drawing, decency, likelihood**

*The term proportion was widely used in artistic treatises in Europe. All the authors were in agreement regarding the need for artists to fully master this science, the aim of which was to succeed in representing the human figure with credibility. This is why theorists and artists gave practical advice, and defined rules based on the calculation of measurements so as to correctly reproduce the proportions of a person, an animal or an object. But this matter of proportion was not only a question of artistic practice and pedagogy, it was also part of theoretical reflection composed of a quest for ideal beauty. It was addressed as much to painters as to art lovers.*

## Diffusion and Reception of the Theory of Proportions in Europe

Representation of the human figure and the question of proportions had been one of the main preoccupations in Western art since Antiquity. The proportions of the human body were detailed by Vitruvius in his *De architectura* (30–25 BC), and it was on the basis of these proportions that a building needed to be conceived in order to be harmonious. In the Renaissance, they became a canon of beauty that had changed little. Proportions were analysed by Italian academics in the 16th century, then in France a century later, and were the subject of studies in artistic treatises, the most famous of which are Alrecht Dürer's *Hierin sind begriffen vier Bücher von menschlicher Proportion*, 1531, translated into French (*Quatre livres des proportions*, Four volumes on proportions) in 1557 and 1614, and the first seven tomes that made up Gian Paolo Lomazzo's *Trattato della pittura . . .*, translated into English by Richard Haydocke in 1598 and French by Hilaire Pader in 1649. The latter translation was in reality a summary of Dürer's and Lomazzo's works as, to make the theory of the Milanais painter and theorist more accessible, Pader added engravings, the models of which he found in the treatise by Dürer, personifying them with hair, attributes and accessories. The work contained long extracts from the writings on art, in the passages devoted to proportions, whether they were cited in the references or not (Goeree, 1682; Dupuy du Grez, 1699). The treatise on *Les Proportions du corps humain mesurées sur les plus belles figures de l'antiquité* by Gérard Audran (1683), which included thirty plates preceded by a preface, was also widely diffused in Europe: it was translated into Dutch and German (c. 1690). Presented as a set of rules liable to help newcomers to art and allow the recipients of the works to better appreciate them, the concept of proportion underwent a number of variations focusing on its role in the definition of painting, and was subject to differences on the question of how to apply these rules, judged by some to be an obstacle to the artist's genius.

## Definition and Role of Proportion in Theory

Proportion was introduced into the definition of painting in the first tome of Lomazzo's *Trattato della pittura . . .* (1585), as "all these representations and demonstrations that painting makes, come from lines in proportion: from whence one must take care that when drawing, the Painter does not draw lines without Reason, Proportion and Art"



(*toutes ces representation & demonstrations que la peinture fait, c'est par des lignes proportionnées: où l'on doit prendre garde que le Peintre desseignant ne tire pas les lignes sans Raison, Proportion, & Art, Pader, 1649, p. 3–4*). Reason supposes that the wise painter knows the proportions that he wants to imitate before starting to draw, an idea that was shared by others, such as Abraham Bosse (1667, p. 22), and referred the practice of painting to the status of liberal art.

Associated with the theory of imitation, for Lomazzo proportion corresponded to the first of the five parts of painting, which were: the position and situation of the figures (the *moti*), colour, light and perspective. Its rank shows the considerable importance it was given, as this privileged position coincided with the painter's apprenticeship, during which from the outset he was obliged to master the rules of proportions (Bate, 1634, p. 112; Pader, 1657, p. 9; La Fontaine, 1679, p. 44). For Fréart de Chambray, this apprenticeship was easy, mechanical, and was merely a stage, because in order to approach perfection, the painter needed above all to learn geometry, the source of all arts (1662, p. 11). For Restout, proportion corresponded to the second part of painting, coming after "invention, or history, which included ordinance or disposition" (*l'invention, ou l'histoire, qui comprend l'ordonnance ou disposition*). It included the drawing, movement and balance of bodies (1681, p. 115), whereas for De Piles at approximately the same time, proportion was considered to be part of drawing (1684, p. 3–4; an idea returned to by Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 10) and at the same time, it was, with measurements, the basis of painting that allowed the painter to take pleasure in his practice (1684, p. 5). According to Willem Goeree, proportion was part of *anatomie* (1682, p. 41). Finally, for Joachim von Sandrart, the role given to the study of proportions varied depending on the edition. In the 1675 version, this part was situated only after drawing and invention, colour and the techniques of painting, whereas in the editions from 1679 and in Latin (1683), proportion, as for Van Mander for example, was always placed after drawing, but before colour (Heck, 2006, p. 367, n. 5).

The most common definition of *proportion* was the one in relation to a part of a whole. Nevertheless, the term was often replaced by that of *measure*, which was used as a synonym. The concept of relationship was formulated in terms of "consonance and correspondence" (*consonance et correspondance*) by Pader (1649, p. 15), "symmetry or correspondence" (*symétrie ou correspondance*) by Fréart de Chambray (1662, p. 11), "decency" (*convenance*) by Félibien (1676, p. 711),

and “just correspondence” (*juste correspondance*) by De Piles (1699, p. 78–79). As in Fréart de Chambray, from whom he took great inspiration, Restout used the term *symmetry* as a synonym for *proportion* (1681, p. 115), whereas for Charles Batteux in the next century, proportion “went further” (*va plus loin*) than symmetry, to the extent that each part is compared to another and to a whole (1746, p. 86–87); Marsy considered at the same period that symmetry was “a major defect in a painting” (*un grand défaut dans un tableau*, 1746, II, p. 243). In the texts in Dutch by Van Mander (1604, III, 1–4, fol. 10r.) and Junius (1641, p. 203–204), German by Sandrart (1675 and 1679) and English by Sanderson (1658, p. 45), the science of proportions was based on the principle of *analogy*, which came from the translation of the Latin term, indicating a similarity or equality in the relationships between things.

The adjectives *just* (*juste*) and *beautiful* (*belle*) were frequently associated with the word *proportion*. The former entered into the definition of a correct drawing (De Piles, 1708, p. 128–130). It referred to the concepts of standard and rule that had to be respected, whilst trying to vary attitudes as it was possible to observe in nature (De Piles, 1677, p. 262–263). The proportions thus had to be not only reduced to the outline, the drawn line, or the application of a rule, it was also necessary to put the human figure into relief, with roundness, using “light and shade” (*des jours et des ombres*) applied to certain parts of the body (De Piles, 1684, p. 8–9; Testelin, 1692 or 1693, p. 13; Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 134; De Lairese, 1701, p. 40–41). *Beautiful* evoked the idea of ideal beauty produced by just and harmonious proportions, called *eurythmy* by Vitruvius. For Félibien, it was the proportions and symmetry that generated beauty, and not the contrary (1666, p. 37–37), for beauty was to be found in the most remarkable of what divine creation had made, that is, man (1666, p. 47). But this quest for beauty also required different modes of calculating the measurements of proportions.

### The Rules of Proportion and the Relationship with the Human Figure

For Lomazzo, proportion was divided into two parts, the proportion “specific to the thing that one desires to represent and paint” (*propre de la chose que l’on veut représenter et peindre*), qualified as “natural” (*naturelle*), and the proportion “depending on the eye and perspective” (*selon l’œil et en perspective*), also called “artificial” (*artificielle*, Pader,

1649, p. 9–10). This distinction was also maintained in the translation by Haydocke (1598) and repeated in the English treatises of the second half of the 17th century by Brown (1675, p. 20–21) and Smith (1692, p. 26–27). It was a question of representing the particular proportion of each figure, that is, that each part of the body be in proportion with another, the hand with the head, etc., taking into consideration the distance between the spectator and the painting. Goeree (1682, p. 78–79) identified three types of proportion: natural (*natuurlijk*), mathematical (*maatredig*) and aesthetic (*des welstaans*).

Calculating proportions was based on the principle that Vitruvius called “commodulation”, which consisted in dividing the body into units of measurement corresponding to a head, and dividing the height of the face into units of measure called minutes. Pader used the proportions established by Lomazzo, taken from observation of ancient statues, for man: ten, nine, eight and seven heads, for woman: ten, nine and seven heads, and for children: six, five and four heads. These proportions were also those recommended by Lodovico Dolce (1557) and translated by Nicolas Vleughels (1735, p. 185–191). The proportion of eight heads was what Goeree (1682, p. 59–60) preferred. Declining the different proportions aimed to allow artists to diversify the canons and adapt them in relation to the gender, age and quality of the person that they had to represent, using the theories of decency and credibility (Angel, 1642, p. 52; Brown, 1675, 16–17; Richardson, 1725, p. 145–147). The figure of ten heads was recommended to represent Mars, that of seven heads for the more robust and stocky body of Hercules. But at the end of the 17th century in France, Lomazzo’s work was the subject of criticism, notably from De Piles in the *Remarques sur l’art de peinture* by Charles Alphonse Du Fresnoy (1668, p. 114), and for whom the various subdivisions could “discourage” (*rebutter*) the painter. He preferred to make use of the ancient model taken from sculptures because of their universality (“which are pleasing to all” (*qui plaisent à tout le monde*, De Piles, 1684, p. 8)). The sculptors of Antiquity had effectively not slavishly imitated nature, but had instead known how to choose what was the most beautiful so as to then assemble it and form figures that were close to perfection. This question was the subject of debates and several conferences at the Académie, including the one by Gérard van Opstal on “The Laocoon” (2 July 1667) and another by Sébastien Bourdon on the “Proportions of the human figure explained in Antiquity” (*Proportions de la figure humaine expliquées sur l’antique*, 5 July 1670). Testelin retained four sorts of

proportion, based on the ancient models: “fat and short, delicate and svelte, strong and powerful, thin and free” (*grosses & courtes, delicates & sveltes, des fortes & puissantes, grelles & deliées*, 1693 or 1694, p. 13; taken up by Le Comte, 1699–1700, vol. 1, p. 15–16).

In Roland Fréart de Chambray’s French translation of Leonardo da Vinci’s treatise on painting, *Traitté de la peinture*, natural proportions were completed by *movement* that was “accommodated to the subject and the intention of the living figure that moves” (*accomodé au sujet & à l’intention de la figure vivante qui se meut*, Da Vinci, 1651, p. 12 and 54). The concept of movement obliged the painter to know other measurements, and to master the science of shortening (De Piles, 1668, p. 88) so as to make use of understanding of the subject, as emphasised by Sandrart (1679, II, Livre 3, chap. 2, p. 13b).

Rendering proportions thus demanded particular qualifications of the artist, who could follow different methods. Da Vinci recommended that painters take the measurements of their own bodies and note what appeared disproportionate to them so as to not reproduce it (1651, p. 61). The “ruler and compas” (*le règle et le compas*), both tools that were essential for geometry, were also useful for respecting a norm and representing the figure to perfection (Bosse, 1649, p. 88–89; Pader, 1657, p. 6; Peacham, 1661, p. 128). According to De Piles on the other hand, it was from observation of the figure that the painter would succeed in rendering the right proportions, using a compass would only be used in last place, to verify the exactitude of the measurements (De Piles, 1684, p. 14–15). For Lebond de Latour (1669, p. 44–45), it was necessary for painters to take care to elongate the limbs by a half-head when the figures were dressed, as clothing tended to compress the body (1669, p. 44–45).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

## Sources

Angel, 1642; Audran, 1683; Bate, 1634; Batteux, 1746; Bosse, 1649, 1667; Browne, 1669 [1675]; Conférences, [2006-2015]; Da Vinci, 1651; De Piles, 1668, 1677, 1684, 1699, 1708; Dolce, 1557; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Durer, 1528 [fr. transl. 1557 et 1614]; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Goeree, 1682; Haydocke, 1598; Junius, 1641; La Fontaine, 1679; Lairesse, 1701; Le Blond De La Tour, 1669; Le Comte, 1699–1700; Lomazzo, 1584; Marsy, 1746; Pader, 1649, 1653

[1657]; Peacham, 1661; Restout, 1681; Richardson, 1715 [1725]; Sanderson, 1658; Sandrart, 1675 et 1679, 1683; Smith, 1692; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Van Mander, 1604.

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## **PUBLIC $\implies$ SPECTATEUR**

|                         |
|-------------------------|
| Pupil $\implies$ School |
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# R

## REDDERING

fr.: /  
angl.: /  
germ.: /

**Composition, *houding*, colour perspective, background, space, landscape, *campo***

*The term reddering was an important compositional and spatial concept in Dutch art theory. It described an arrangement of alternating bands of light and shade that made for a contrast between the foregrounds and backgrounds of pictures, thus evoking a sense of spatial recession. The concept originated in ideas based on contrasts of light and dark, but had a more complex structure.*

### Meaning, Origin and Use of *reddering*

*Reddering* is a compositional term for a sequence of alternating light and dark grounds in a painting, a concept for which other languages use less specific expressions such as “ground” (*champ*, *fond*). While the word in contemporary Dutch is mainly used in the sense of “rescuing” or “saving”, it was also used to mean “arrangement”, “regulation” or “clearing” in the 17th century.

The word *reddering* was introduced into the language of art theory in 1668 by Goeree, loosely based on Leonardo da Vinci's discussions on *campi*, how to render backgrounds and the objects in front of them (Vinci, 1651, LXX, p. 20, CXXXVII, p. 44, CXLI, p. 45, CLX, p. 50, CCLXXXIII, p. 93, CCLXXXVIII, p. 95). Goeree read the French translation of Leonardo, the *Traitté de la peinture* by Roland Fréart de Chambray, published in 1651. Fréart's interpretations made Leonardo's thoughts on contrasts between lit and shaded grounds sound more complex than they were in the Italian original, but Goeree developed them into a new artistic concept. He added the feature of an alternating sequence of light and shadows to the simple form of the contrast described by Leonardo. He also named the concept and associated aspects of compositional arrangement (Goeree, 1697 [1670b], p. 131).

The concept of *reddering* was often used with regard to landscape painting, as the alternating parts of light and shade functioned as elements of colour perspective, so helping to create an effect of spatial recession (Lairesse 1740, I, p. 344). Painters of landscapes, and seascapes in particular, could not always revert to employing elements of linear perspective in order to achieve an effect of space and wide-ness. Alternating bands of light and shade in landscapes could easily be explained with the visual effect of clouds casting their shadows over parts of a landscape.

*Reddering* was related to the concept of *houding*. This was a colour concept, although its elements were light and shade. The fact that it consisted of these two elements made it less complex than *houding*, but as with *houding*, not only the components were relevant, but also the manner in which they were applied. The concept of *reddering* included the way in which the two elements, light and shade, merged through soft transitions, be it through the employment of middle tints or by blurring the outlines. Another feature of *reddering* was the gradual decrease in the contrast between the light and dark parts towards the background.

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### Sources

Da Vinci, 1651; De Lairesse, 1707 [1712]; Goeree, 1668 [1670 b].

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## REFLECTION

fr.: *reflet*  
 germ.: *Lichtreflex, Widerschein*  
 nl.: *reflectie*  
 it.: *riflesso, riverberatione*  
 lat.: *repercussus, reverberatio*

### Light, shadow, colour, relief, union

*Reflected light is a specific situation of secondary lighting and can appear in different forms. When reflections were discussed in art theory, it was usually light reflected in shaded areas that was meant, a condition under which the colours of the reflections were particularly visible. Early modern artists were fascinated by reflections, and in art theory the capacity of reflections to transport coloured light was singled out. The light phenomenon was studied with empirical interest and, at the same time, appreciated for its aesthetic quality of connecting figures and objects in paintings. When questions of scientific accuracy became more and more persistent in the discussions on reflections, they became less relevant for artistic problems of colouring.*

### Reflected Light in Art

Reflections occur when light is cast back at a surface at the angle of incidence, like a bouncing ball (Vinci, 1651, LXXV, p. 22). The appearance of reflections depends mainly on the texture of the surface on to which the light is being reflected: if the surface is even, we get—in the ideal case—a mirror image, and if the surface is uneven, the reflection is diffuse. When writers on art talked about reflections



they usually referred to reflected light in shadows and the way that an object of a certain colour cast a reflection of the same colour on to a nearby shadow (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 262). Reflections of this kind were used by artists to produce an effect of union in the colouring of a picture.

Reflections were mentioned in the early treatises on art. In 1435, Alberti described public experiments with reflected light and noted an observation that the green colour of grass and leaves reflected in human skin in sunshine (Alberti, 1973, p. 26, § 11). Contemporary examples of reflections in art were to be found, for instance, in the paintings by Jan and Hubert van Eyck. Testelin suggested that the popularity of oil colours over tempera was the reason for the introduction of reflections into paintings, this was, of course, a presumption that can be refuted (Testelin, s.d. [1693 ou 1694], p. 39).

Around 1500, Leonardo da Vinci analysed the optical laws of reflections and set down around fifty propositions and diagrams. In the course of the 17th century, the aesthetic functions of reflections became more prominent both in Dutch art theory and in the discussions at the conferences at the Académie Royale. The ability of reflections to transfer coloured light was regarded as useful for painters, allowing them to visually unite figures and objects.

### Reflections in Pictorial Composition

In 1604, Van Mander observed the important qualities that reflected light had, allowing it to create an impression of relief when applied to the shaded side of objects depicted, as for instance in a round column (Mander, 1604, fol. 48v). As a practical help for producing reflections in artificial light, a sheet of bright paper placed close to the object to be rendered was recommended (Goeree, 1697 [1670b], p. 66–67). It is uncertain whether this way of creating reflections was common practice in artists' studios.

The usefulness of reflections for the unity of colours in a picture had already been acknowledged by Leonardo da Vinci, and none of the subsequent writers on art failed to address this quality (Vinci 1651, LXXXIV, p. 25). Discussions of reflections and colouring became particularly prominent in the second half of the 17th century, as the light phenomenon conveniently provided writers on art with scientifically-based arguments for the aesthetic effects of union and beauty in colouring. Grouping objects and colours became firmly associated with reflections,

to the extent that reflections were prevented from being depicted in a painting if these effects could not be clearly recognised (Félibien, 4<sup>e</sup> Entretien, 1669, p. 48; Lairese, 1740, I, p. 264).

In judging the intensity of reflected light, artists were warned of making reflections too strong, especially with regard to rendering human skin. The danger was that their depictions would then result in a “copperish” (koperachtig) effect (Goeree, 1697 [1670b], p. 127) and appear “as diaphanous as if they were made of glass” (*diaphanes comme s’ils étaient de verre*, Mérot, 1996, p. 191; Félibien, 1725, 7<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 430). The appearance of reflections in terms of their colours was usually described with warm tints such as red and yellow, or “glowing” colours. In view of the painting practices in Rembrandt’s studio, reflections were compared to brown-red (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 267). Artists were discouraged from using bright pigments such as vermilion, red orpiment or ultramarine, a practice that was associated with Rubens and the artists of his circle (Lairese, 1740 [1712], I, p. 264–265).

In the 18th century, French empiricists tried to find more scientifically accurate guidance for establishing the right amount and intensity of reflections (Cochin, 1753, p. 193–198). At this point, natural law and the rules of art developed in separate directions. Reflected light and colours lost their existence as a hybrid form between art and nature, and were replaced by other colour systems.

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### Sources

Alberti, 1435 [1540]; Cochin, 1757; Coypel, 1721; Da Vinci, 1651; De Lairese, 1707 [1712]; Félibien, 1666–1688; Goeree, 1668 [1670 b]; Hoogstraten, 1678; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694]; Van Mander, 1604.

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Relief  $\implies$  Reflection

Resemblance  $\implies$  Portrait, Caricature, Imitation, Portrait, Natural/  
Naturalness

Repose  $\implies$  Chiaroscuro, Group, Houding

## RÉVEILLON

fr.: /

germ.: *Dru(c)ker, Drücker, Druckchen*

nl.: *Douw(e), douwken*

it.: *lumi*

**Light, brightness, glare, glow, lustre, tonus, shine, clearness, mass, touch, houding**

*The réveillons were the luminous parts of a painting. Characterised as this were the brushstrokes of pure colour, called hard because they stood out clearly from the background. These colours were affixed to the objects that were closest or to objects situated in the foreground of a work to make them stand out, or to plunge a very specific part into light. Most of the time, the “réveillons de touche” were small strokes of bright colour that released from blandness or monotony the dimmed tone in the shade or half-shade. They were supposed to bring the observer to life and arouse his attention. The finesse and capacity for judgement of a painter were necessary to maintain at each instant the balance between the range of colours and the composition of the whole. The equivalent terms in the terminology of art in the Netherlands and Germany were Douw and Drucker as through these clear and pronounced strokes of colour, the other objects appeared to have been visually pushed back.*

## Staging Light—the Eye’s Journey

In Dezallier d’Argenville’s *Abrégé* from 1745–1752, the *réveillons* were “a part stung by a bright light” (*une partie piquée d’une lumière vive*, 1745–1752, I, p. XXXVI); they were to painting what dissonance was to music. In general they were motivated by *accidents*—light that fell on the canvas by chance. We can find an ancestor of this concept in the verbal form “*réveiller*”, which Coypel used in his conference on 8 July 1713 (*Le coloris et le pinceau*). According to Coypel, in certain cases the painter tried, in order to produce a “burst of colour” (*éclat de couleurs*), to “increase their vivacity in the places where the light struck the most” (*augmenter leur vivacité aux endroits où la lumière frappe le plus*, 1713, cited in Lichtenstein and Michel, t. IV, vol. 1, p. 80). This was the case with regard to large areas of shade: “the strong, red shades, put into agreement, awaken the work and give it life” (*les ombres rousses et fortes, mises à propos, réveillent l’ouvrage et lui donnent vie*, 1713, cited in Lichtenstein and Michel, t. IV, vol. 1, p. 80). The opinions of contemporary artists, art critics and art lovers diverged considerably. In the conference on 4 November 1747, Caylus described *réveillons* as the “instruments of discourse in a concert that interrupts the beautiful effect” (*instruments du discours dans un concert qui en interrompent le bel effet*, cited in Lichtenstein and Michel, t. V, vol. 1, p. 74). For Watelet the *réveillons de touche* were small exaggerations that one could easily pardon given their pictorial effect (1791, p. 261). Dandré Bardon (1765, p. 179) qualified as “spices” (*épices*) (“add some zest” (*jetter du piquant*), “add some spice” (*jetter du ragoût*)) these “subordinate vigours” (*vigueurs subordonnées*) because they freed the canvas of its monotony (“awoke it” (*réveillent*)). This point of view provoked a biting response from Diderot in his *Pensées détachées*: “All these *réveillons* are false. One would think that a painting is like a stew, to which one can always remove or add a pinch of salt” (*Tous ces réveillons sont faux. On dirait qu’il en est d’un tableau comme d’un ragoût, auquel on peut toujours ôter ou donner une pointe de sel*, 1767, ed. cit. 1996, p. 1036). In French artistic lexicography, the term only appeared in the second half of the 18th century: the authors returned often to the words of Dezallier, as did for example Jaucourt in the *Encyclopédie*, or like Lacombe, Le Virloys or Pernety, who brought the term into relation with “*coup de jour*” (*Schlaglicht*). In the German translation of Pernety’s dictionary (1764), the equivalent *Drucker* was

introduced. As for the French-Italian dictionaries of the period, we can find as translation the word *lumi*.

### Partisans and Contradictors with Regard to *Houding* (*Haltung*)

The Dutch equivalent *douwkens* was used in the second chapter, *Van het teyckenen/ oft Teycken-const* of Van Mander's *Grondt* (1604, f. 9r). In it, it was a question of the use of "hard strokes" (*harde douwkens*) to create the contrast between the areas of light and shade. In Kiliaan's *Etymologicum teutonicae Linguae* (1599), *pressura* was the Latin equivalent of *douw*, *douwe*. For Sandrart, there was no technical term for *douw/douwken* or *drucker*. He presented his point of view on the subject of touches of hard colour in the thirteenth chapter, *Von der Austheilung und Vereinigung der Farben* (1675, p. 85) as a clear standpoint in the context of a contemporary controversy: even if he was contradicted violently, for him, the last brushstrokes or light added at the last minute (*hartes hintan-mahlen*) needed to be avoided at all costs. The "hard and brilliant" (*hartkrellige*) nature of unbroken colours provoked *Discordanz* in a painting, which is why "hard, luminous and acute colours" (*Harte/helle und hohe Farben*) had to be avoided, or "broken as in nature" (*Natur-ähnlich gebrochen*). It was only in this way that the decrease (*disminuirung*), which the Dutch called *Houding*, could be achieved. The opposite of *hard* was *soft*, which characterised colours that were well-blended and drowned in the whole. A century later, the evaluation of *Drucker* with regard to the *houding/Haltung* in painting had completely changed. For Sulzer (1771, p. 282), they were the small, clear strokes themselves that suggested the proximity of the spectator's eye. The force expressed by *glückliche Druker* was magical, and it was through the "brushstrokes of strong, whole colours" (*Pinselstriche von starken und ganzen Farben*) on objects seen close up that *houding/Haltung* "attained perfection" (*ihre Vollkommenheit erreicht*).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Conférences, [2006-2015]; Dandré-Bardon, 1765; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745-1752; Diderot, 1759, 1763, 1765, 1769; Kiliaan, 1599; Lacombe, 1752; Le Virloys, 1770-1771; Pernety, 1757; Sandrart, 1675 et 1679; Sulzer, 1771-1774; Van Mander, 1604; Watelet, Levesque, 1788-1791.

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## RULE

fr.: *règle*  
 germ.: *Regel, Lehrsatz*  
 nl.: *regel, kunstregel*  
 it.: *regola*  
 lat.: *norma*

**Principle, maxim, precept, axiom, canon, method, theory, practice**

*The debates on rules was supported by two questions: could art be taught through rules? And, are rules useful for painters? The need to establish rules, not present at all in Vasari's work, only appeared in Italy at the end of the 16th century, in a very particular context that corresponded to a time when it was stated that art could be taught in academies, and that rules could be a remedy to the decline of art. In the *Veri Precetti della Pittura* (1587), Armenini thus wrote a manual of painting for painters, allowing them to acquire a good style. Although the question of rules remained fundamental in the 17th century, and although the theorists recognised their utility, they also expressed the difficulty there was in formulating them. Rules remained associated with the appreciation of perfection, but for the Italian theorists of the second half of the 16th century, they were no longer seen from the point of view of a regeneration of art. They were important in the context of learning, and those on perspective, proportions and anatomy were prescriptive, while others were much more general. Above all, they expressed the close relationship established between theory and practice. Considering theory as a reflection on practice, and painting as a practical expression of theory, induced a less restrictive conception of rules, which in turn induced reflection on their nature and use.*

### Foundation, Precept, Principle and Rule

Although Hilaire Pader differentiated the precepts he applied to theory from practical rules (1649, p. 9), this distinction was nevertheless not as clear-cut as it might seem, and the different terms were used with different meanings depending on the context.

Van Mander called his theoretical chapters *Den Grondt der edel vry schilderconst* [1604, *The foundations of the noble and free art of painting*] and used them as the introduction to the *Lives*. They were destined for young painters. He dealt with the manner of conceiving a work of art, the status of the artist, the conception of the drawing, the light of the colour, and provided certain practical indications. De Grebber called his work *Regulen: Welcke by een goet Schilder en Teyckenaer geobserveert en achtervolght moeten werden; Tesamen ghestelt tot lust van de leergierighe Discipelen* [1649, *Rules which a good Painter and Master of Drawing should observe: Compiled at the request of eager-to-learn Disciples*]. Sandrart concluded his theoretical chapters by stating twenty-five rules (*Mahlerey-Regel*, 1675, p. 102–103). It was not a list of knowledge, or either technical or practical indications contained within the chapters of the *Teutsche Academie*, nor were they precise rules, but rather precepts relative to the manner of painting, the attitude of the painter when faced with his work and his public, all deduced from practice and which Sandrart often took from Da Vinci's *Trattato*. The affirmation of rules nevertheless obeyed the same pedagogical objective regarding the teaching of painting; for the German theorist, it also corresponded to a desire to educate the spectator.

For Fréart de Chambray, observation “of all the fundamental Principles” (*de tous les Principes fondamentaux*) was the only way for Painting to survive (Fréart de Chambray, 1662, *Préface*, n.p.). The term *principle* here needed to be understood in its dual meaning. It expressed everything that had to govern all the different parts of a painting, and also aimed to define the rules that would play a part in restoring the perfection of art. Following the words of Junius, who spoke of *regulen*, *rule*, *praeceps* (II, III. 3), Fréart combined for that two approaches: the first through the statement of principles, the second through analysis of examples, and thus laid down the foundations of academic teaching.

## Necessity and Uses

All these terms, and all these approaches, nevertheless revealed the importance of defining rules, with the clear aim of providing training for young painters. Obeying the rules was nevertheless not limited to acquiring studio recipes, it had to open the eyes of the young artists during their apprenticeship, and show them the right path to follow (Sandrart, 1679, p. 11; Goeree, 1682, p. 60–62).

The French theorists insisted on another quality for the rules. Knowledge of them, and obeying them, educated their understanding, “for working with judgement, always having their ideas present, so that they might specifically lead them with precision in their works” (*pour en travaillant de jugement, en avoir toujours les idées presentes, afin qu’elles puissent précisément le conduire avec justesse dans ses ouvrages*, Fréart de Chambray, *Préface*, n.p.; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 14). Bosse thus proposed that the compass and rule be within the imagination and that they be used in the same way that these tools were used in the hand (Bosse, 1667, p. 51).

Rules were thus defined for certain parts of painting. They covered geometry, optics, perspective (Félibien, 1672, 4<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 392–393; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 40; Goeree, 1670, p. 17–18), and proportions (Audran, 1683, n.p. [1]; Browne, 1675, p. 3, 5–9; Smith, 1692, p. 32–34, 64–67; Goeree, 1682, p. 43–44, 58). Others focused on the use of colours (Le Blond de la Tour, 1669, p. 46; Aglionby, 1685, p. 18–20, p. 111–113; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 38), light and shade (Peacham, 1634, p. 31–35; Dufresnoy / De Piles, 1668, p. 32, about Titian’s bunch of grapes (1588–1676); Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 29 [bis]; Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 305–306), or even landscape (Peacham, 1634, p. 39–40; Sanderson, 1658, p. 72–73; Salmon, 1672, p. 6–10).

These rules, considered to be universal (Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 40), certainly prevented painters from making errors, but they also provoked debates, particularly in France. A more normative, or even dogmatic, discourse effectively appeared in the writings of certain theorists, particularly when those writings defended the provincial academies in France. By confirming their infallibility, they vilified painters who refused to submit to them (Restout, 1681, p. 37, 46). Other theorists stood up against their systematic use, and encouraged painters to harmonise vision with reason that they might “do nothing



that was not at the discretion of both” (*ne fasse rien qui ne soit au gré de toutes deux*, Félibien, 1672, 4<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 392–393). The debate was particularly lively at the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture* in Paris on the subject of perspective. The Academicians preferred to teach composition from selected models rather than through rules (Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694], p. 27), and undertook to study the attitudes and movements of passions from live models (De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 233*, p. 117–119; Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 135).

There were two reasons for this. On the one hand, it was not possible to teach everything with rules; painters also needed to look at life in many cases (Goeree, 1670, p. 121–122). On the other, there was “in Painting several things for which we cannot give such precise rules (\*given that the most beautiful often cannot be expressed because there are not the terms needed)” (*dans la Peinture plusieurs choses, dont on ne puisse pas donner de regles si precises (\*veu que les plus belles choses ne se peuvent souvent exprimer faute de termes)*, Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668, p. 8). Junius recalled the example of the statue of Polycletus for which the sculptor did not write any rules but whose statue itself was used as the rules to the extent that those who obeyed them created perfect works (Junius, II, III. 3).

### The Nature of the Rules

Although following the rules was often considered to be a founding principle of practice (Bosse, 1667, *dédicace*, n.p.), certain theorists recognised the limitations of this:

If there is a means of better revealing the parts of a Painting, to give it greater force, more beauty, and more grace; this is a means that does not exist in any rules that can be taught, but which is discovered by the light of reason, and in which sometimes it is necessary to conduct oneself in contradiction to the ordinary rules of Art.

*(S’il y a un moyen pour faire davantage paroistre les parties d’un Tableau, pour leur donner plus de force, plus de beauté & plus de grace; c’est un moyen qui ne consiste pas en des regles qu’on puisse enseigner, mais qui se découvre par la lumiere de la raison, & où quelquefois il faut se conduire contre les regles ordinaires de l’Art).* (Félibien, 1666, *Préface*, n.p.)

To create and establish a rule, it was important for theorists to find justification for it. This legitimacy was the implicit reason for the affirmation of the relationship between nature and rule. The accuracy of the latter was deduced from assiduous, repeated observation of

nature (Van Mander, 1604, fol. 12r.; Pader, 1649, p. 4; Goeree, 1670, p. 20–21). Whereas the discourse on the importance of rules tended to disappear in the 18th century, this idea continued to be affirmed in an even stronger manner:

The Arts do not create their rules; they are independent of their whimsy, and invariably traced in the example of Nature.

*(Les Arts ne créent point leurs règles: elles sont indépendants de leur caprice, & invariablement tracées dans l'exemple de la Nature.)*

(Batteux, 1746, p. 12–13)

In this way, a discourse that put things into perspective appeared in the writings of French theorists. In nature, there were many rules effectively, thus compromising their infallibility and their universality:

And from that one should not be astonished, as in Nature a thousand different beauties encounter one another, and they are neither rare nor surprising, simply that they are extraordinary and quite often contrary to the natural order. One must thus not imagine that in this Art, nor in any others, all the rules are as sure as in Geometry.

*(Et de cela on ne doit point s'en estonner, puis que dans la Nature il se rencontre mille differentes beautez qui ne sont rares & surprenantes, que parce qu'elles sont extraordinaires & bien souvent contre l'ordre naturel. Qu'on ne s' imagine donc pas qu'en cet Art, non plus qu'en plusieurs autres, toutes les regles en soient aussi certaines comme dans la Geometrie).*

(Félibien, 1666, *Préface*, n.p.)

The difficulty in defining them thus lay in the fact that codifying them was difficult to support, and the rules remained an hidden science:

However, they have not yet been able to discover this reason so hidden yet so true; by the means of which they would be able to establish assured and demonstrative rules, to produce works that could just as much satisfy the eyes, as with time we have found a means to satisfy the ears thanks to harmonious proportions.

*(Cependant ils n'ont pû encore découvrir cette raison si cachée, & pourtant si vraye; par le moyen de laquelle ils pourroient établir des regles assurées & démonstratives, pour faire des ouvrages qui pussent aussi-bien satisfaire les yeux, comme avec le temps on a trouvé moyen de satisfaire l'ouïe par des proportions harmoniques).*

(Félibien, 1685, 7<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 154–156)

As the act of painting was not limited to the application of rules or simply copying from models, and as reason was the foundation as much for theory as for practice, nature and the role of rules were reconsidered.

For Richardson (1719, p. 130–132), they had to be derived from reason. Certain parts of painting, such as invention, could not be acquired through rules (Junius, I, III. 5), but were acquired through experience, practice and reasoning (Félibien, 1666, *Préface*, n.p.).

Just as De Piles made a distinction between the beauty that pleased through its rules and grace (1715, p. 10–11), Félibien insisted on the importance of genius for providing a painting with force, majesty and grace (1666, *Préface*, n.p.). The rules thus appeared as a hindrance. Dufresnoy did not want to “suffocate Genius with a mountain of Rules” (*étoufer le Genie par un amas de Regles*, 1668, p. 4). De Piles encouraged painters to not become slave to them (1668, *Remarque 117*, p. 94–95).

[Search for everything that will help your Art and is suitable for it, flee all that is repugnant to it.] This Precept is admirable: it is necessary for the Painter to have this always in his mind and memory; it is this that will solve all the difficulties that the Rules have provoked, it is this that liberates the hands and helps them to understand, and finally it is this that brings freedom to the Painter, as it teaches him that he must not be slavishly bound and enslaved by the Rules of his Art; but the Rules of his Art must be subject to him, not in any way preventing him from following his Genius which passed them.

*[Cherchez tout ce qui aide vôtre Art & qui luy convient, fuyez tout ce qui luy repugne.] Ce Precepte est admirable: il faut que le Peintre l'aye toujours present dans l'esprit & dans la memoire; c'est luy qui resout les difficultez que les Regles font naître, c'est luy qui délie les mains & qui aide l'entendement, c'est luy enfin qui met le Peintre en liberté, puis qu'il luy apprend, qu'il ne doit point s'assujettir servilement & en esclave aux Regles de son Art; mais que les Regles de son Art luy doivent estre sujettes, en ne l'empeschant point de suivre son Genie qui les passé).*

(De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 432*, p. 139)

Appropriating the rules no longer meant holding them in one's hand, reason and imagination. It also meant being free to apply them or not (De Piles, 1715, p. 103104; Du Bos, 1740, p. 5).

Did paintings please more thanks to an “attractive charm that surprises one's gaze” (*charme attrayant qui surprend la vue*) or thanks to precise observation of the rules? This question was debated at the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture de Paris* during the conferences in 1676, and the answer was reported by Testelin, who stated that it was necessary to judge a painting “according to whether or not the correctness and precision of the parts were in conformity with the regularity of the rules and reasoning” (*suivant la correction & precision*

*des parties se trouve conforme à la regularité des règles & du raisonnement*, Testelin, s.d. [1693 ou 1694], p. 37). On the other hand, for Du Bos, a work of art could be bad without there being any errors with regard to the rules, and good, or even excellent, even if it were full of errors. Just as the importance of the rules was brought into question for painters, the theorists of the 18th century rejected the idea that it was necessary to know the principles that governed a painting in order to appreciate it (Coypel, 1732, p. 33). Du Bos cited Cicero to affirm that “All men, with the help of the inner feeling that is within them, know, without being familiar with the rules, if the productions of art are good or bad works, and if the reasoning that they intend concludes well” (*Tous les hommes, à l'aide du sentiment intérieur qui est en eux, connoissent sans sçavoir les regles, si les productions des arts sont de bons ou de mauvais ouvrages, & si le raisonnement qu'ils entendent conclut bien*, Du Bos, 1740, p. 330–332). This natural taste was opposed to attention that slavishly obeyed rules and produced only dryness and coldness (La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747, p. 4).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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# S

## SCHOOL

fr.: *école*  
germ.: *Schule*  
nl.: *school, college, oefenschool*  
it.: *scuola*  
lat.: *schola*

**Style, manner, taste, nation, academy, air, master, learner, pupil, perfection**

*The word school used in artistic literature refers to both the idea of teaching structured by a pedagogical programme which, by synonymy, is sometimes replaced by the term academy, and an intellectual construction that makes it possible to classify painters according to the place in which they were born or practised their profession. The latter meaning also touched on the question of the definition of an artistic identity, and that of the manner of artists—an essential point for identifying and attributing their works. With the development of dictionaries, and catalogues for sales, exhibitions and museums, the use of the term school has become a methodological tool that is specific to art history for classifying artists and works.*

## The Theoretical Construction

The term school derived from the Latin *schola*, which designated both a leisure activity dedicated to studying and a place in which teaching was dispensed, and was above all attached to the field of painting in artistic literature. It was associated with a place that could be a city (the Florence school, the Venice school . . . ), a region (the Roman school, the Lombardy school . . . ), a country (the Dutch school, the Italian school . . . ) or an artist (the Raphael school, the Titian school . . . ). It was in this sense that it featured in the second edition of Furetière's *Dictionnaire* (1702): "school: term used in Painting to distinguish the different manners of places or people: such as the School of Rome, the School of Venice, the Flemish School. Also used for the School of Raphael, Titian, the Carracci etc." (*escole: se dit en Peinture, pour distinguer les différentes manières des lieux, ou des personnes: comme l'Ecole de Rome, l'Ecole de Venise, l'Ecole Flamande. On dit encore l'Ecole de Raphaël, du Titien, des Carraches &c.*). A little earlier, the Toulouse lawyer and art lover, Bernard Dupuy du Grez, in the part devoted to the definition and history of painting in his *Traité sur la peinture*, insisted on the need to define the word *school*: "which does not mean a place in which Art is taught, but the taste that one has in a certain country or climate, a certain manner that can be distinguished as soon as one sees a work" (*qui ne signifie pas un lieu où l'on enseigne l'Art, mais le goût qu'on a dans un certain pays ou climat, une certaine manière qui se distingue d'abord qu'on voit un ouvrage, Première dissertation, 1699, p. 75*). The theorist considered that the stylistic unity of artistic production was above all attached to the place of creation and the climate. The idea that the latter could determine the character of each individual, each people, was developed in the previous century on the basis of Abbé Du Bos' *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et la peinture* in which: "the climate was more powerful than the blood or origin" (*le climat était plus puissant que le sang et l'origine, 1740, II, p. 267*). This discourse, which tended to affirm a strong identity, found its basis in Vasari's *Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti* (1550), which used it for ideological purposes to claim the primacy of Florence and Tuscany over Rome and Venice. The talent and genius of the Florentine artists were directly linked to the air that they breathed. The construction of the school was based on a cyclical conception of art, itself based on the model of natural sciences: birth, development, apogee—designated in art by the occurrence of *perfection*—decadence, death. The art of the Renais-

sance was born with Cimabue (c. 1240-c.1302), who pulled painting out of chaos, and developed with Masaccio (1401–1428), Donatello (c. 1386–1466) and Brunelleschi (1377–1446), reaching its paroxysm with Raphael (1483–1520), da Vinci (1452–1519) and Michelangelo (1475–1564). The latter, however, had carried the treatment of the human figure to such heights that it was to be feared that art would fall to even greater depths after him. In the second edition of the *Vite* (1568), the historiographer moderated his words: Raphael became the most balanced artist, even though he never succeeded in equalling Michelangelo in the art of drawing; and the Venetians were treated with greater benevolence than in the past.

The principle of construction of the Florentine school established in the *Vite*, based on the idea of progress in art, with a leader and prestigious filiations, was reused afterwards in Europe in the writings on art, by modifying the places and artists. Its use became generalised with the development of the *Lives* of artists, sometimes collected into dictionaries. Thus, Roger De Piles in the preface of the *Abrégé de la vie des peintres* (1699), a manual designed for amateurs, insisted on the artist's place of birth, as well as on his master and the disciples that he trained.

In Bellori's *Vite* (1672) he transposed the myth of the rebirth of Florence to Rome and replaced Giotto (c. 1266–1337) with Annibale Carracci (1560–1609). At the same time, in Paris, at a time when art was a major political issue for affirming royal power in Europe, Félibien made Jean Cousin the Elder (c. 1490-c.1560) the father of the French school. In the provinces, Dupuy du Grez also appropriated this model so as to lift the sculptor Nicolas Bachelier (1500–1556) to the rank of leader of the Toulouse school, the symbolic issue of which was to support his project to establish a school that provided artistic teaching supported by the city. The roles given to Cousin and Bachelier had a common aim: to play a part in the renaissance of art which was at the time plunged into a period of artistic decadence, the barbaric style of the Middle Ages. The relationship between school of painting as an intellectual construction and place of learning (academy) was thus put forward to justify the creation of the school of England in the second half of the 18th century (Waletet-Levesque, II, 1792, p. 109).



### The Emergence of Northern Specificity

This specificity appeared in texts such as Van Mander's *Schilder-Boek* (1604) or Sandrart's *Teutsche Academie* (1675), which followed on from the Italian tradition of Vasari's *Vite* by writing the biographies of artists. Taking into account the artists from the north thus resulted in a new artistic geography. Under the title of *Nederlandsche en Hochduitsche* or *Hoch- und Nieder-Teutschen* or *Germanie inférieure et supérieure* (L. Giucciardini, 1567), the northern region was, for the most part, considered to be an open space. For Van Mander, each city had a very great importance, for sure, and served the purpose of unity of place. However, the biographical notices did not follow any geographical principle, but were instead ordered in terms of chronology (ancient and active), thus bearing witness to the absence of a global vision of clearly differentiated entities. Sandrart kept this definition of northern area even though in 1675 the separation between the Northern and Southern Netherlands had been perfectly consummated. He did not take into account the normative criteria that defined the Flemish and Dutch schools. This vision, which did not reflect the political reality on which art history is now based, revealed the consciousness for artistic unity that was characterised by the circulation of artists and works in the northern area. On the other hand, the distinction between Holland and Flanders was fully assumed by Félibien:

the graces of Heaven were at the same time equally distributed almost everywhere in Europe, as in Germany, Holland and Flanders great men appeared, whose reputation carried as far as Rome.

*(les grâces du Ciel furent en même temps également distribuées presque partout en Europe, puisqu'en Allemagne, en Hollande et Flandre, il parut de grands hommes, dont la réputation allait jusqu'à Rome.)*

(1672, 2<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 318)

The Vasari-style historical model based on biological processes was retained by Van Mander, but the emergence of art to the north of the Alps corresponded, for the theorist, to a period of decadence in art in Italy, whereas the artists in the north made the transfer of models from Italy to the regions in the north. The cornerstone of historical construction for him was Goltzius (1558–1617). The idea of evolution, blossoming, growth and decline remained valid until the Renaissance for Sandrart, who nevertheless replaced Michelangelo with Titian (c. 1488–1576) and Veronese (1528–1588). This modification allowed the German theorist to completely reassess northern art which was

from then no longer measured against Italian art. The extremely varied northern artists—Dürer (1471–1528), Poussin (1594–1665), Rubens (1577–1640), Rembrandt (1606–1669)—were thus presented as essential in the quest for perfection. This conception resulted in a new definition of the history of art, which no longer sought a single model, Raphael or Michelangelo or Goltzius. The cyclical vision of history was also abandoned in favour of a continuous time that considered the northern school as a set of artists with very varied talents who all, at one time or another, carried art to perfection. This approach was radically different to the nationalistic or parochialistic conception that Vasari attached to the notion of school in the 18th century.

Furthermore, rejecting the theory of climates, Sandrart substituted *ingenium* for *aria*, that is, the air (of Florence) that had the power to encourage creativity. For the German theorist, the renaissance in the arts was caused by the more subtle, more reasonable minds (*mehr begeisterte und subtilere ingenia*, 1675, I, 1, p. 9–10) which were the result of application and study. Adapting the theory of climates that was also the basis of the concept of school was still very present in the writings on art of Van Mander, Hoogstraten, and Lairesse. It nevertheless underwent a certain mutation in the Netherlands. Hoogstraten put the concept considerably into perspective by placing, like Sandrart, the concept of talent at the heart of his discourse. More than a local tradition determined by the climate, it was an expression in the painter's art of a know-how that defined the quality of the artist, his specificity and his skill and which, as a result, was the origin of an artist's notoriety and his ability to transmit. More than contingencies of climate or place, the real link that united artists was their profession and, above all, their manner.

### Pedagogical Stakes

The question of school was also part of the vocabulary of artists seeking to establish a pedagogical programme to guide young apprentices. The term *school* was then used to mean the idea of teaching, as in the *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst (Introduction to the higher school of painting*, 1678), in which Hoogstraten underlined the intention of teaching through the term High School (*Hooge school*), which differed from the term *Academy* used by Sandrart, and proposed a programme structured in nine classes. In the *Peinture parlante* (1653), Pader organised teaching in two classes, proportion and movement,

which corresponded to the first two books of Lomazzo's *Trattato della pittura* (1584). For painters, the term school also designated the master to follow, thus serving as a marker for young beginners. It was in particular the stake of the seven governors of painting (Michelangelo, Gaudenzio Ferrari, Titian, da Vinci, Mantegna, Raphael and Polidoro da Caravaggio), in Lomazzo's *Idea del tempio della pittura* (1590). The question of belonging to one school or another was a subject of debate in the Italian academies in the 1630s because it touched on the problem of imitating the great masters and the difficult choice facing novices. Should they adopt the manner of Caravaggio, or Cavalier d'Arpin, or another painter? Or should they focus only on the manner of the grand masters such as Raphael and Poussin, the tutelary figures of painting according to Félibien and Charles Le Brun?

### School and Manner

At the same time that the concept of school was defined as an entity, it was indispensable to specify the distinctive characters so as to be able to identify a master and his disciples or a work. This was the sense of the word *manner*, used in the definitions by Furetière and Dupuy du Grez. For Dezallier d'Argenville, *manner* was substituted by *taste* and *style*. In his opinion, "The taste of the country in which the drawing was done formed the school" (*Le goût du pays dans lequel a été fait le dessein, en constate l'école*, I, 1745–1755, p. XXIV-XXV). He distinguished three schools: Italian, Flemish and French, subdivided into regional schools, with the aim of being able to recognise and find the origin of drawings and then classify them. He nevertheless placed in the definition of the nature of a painter a dimension other than purely formal, leading him to research the "sublime of a drawing" (*sublime d'un dessin*), which revealed the genius of the artist, and his ability to embellish and perfect nature:

The characters of the style of a painter, these marks of his writing, wish still to be accompanied by his manner of thinking, and a certain spiritual touch that characterises him. The sublime of a drawing is the salt that is specific to the thought of the painter, the thought that moves our imagination and represents its true nature to us; we can thus be sure of the school of a painter and its name.

*(Ces caractères du style d'un peintre, ces marques de son écriture veulent encore être accompagnés de sa manière de penser, & d'une certaine touche spirituelle qui le caractérise. Le sublime d'un dessein est ce sel qui est*

*la propre pensée du peintre, laquelle remue notre imagination, & nous représente son véritable caractère; alors on pourra être sûr de l'école d'un peintre & de son nom.)*

(Dezallier d'Argenville I, 1745–1755, p. III et XXVIII)

This taxonomic mode thus became a tool in the history of art for classifying, attributing and presenting works per school, as seen in the very long notice devoted to the term *school* in Watelet and Levesque's dictionary (1792). In his *Dictionnaire abrégé de peinture et d'architecture . . .* (1746, I, p. 199), Marsy distinguished five schools, which he also called *classes*, that is: the Roman or Florentine school, the Venetian school, the Lombardy school, the Flemish and German school, and the French school. He specified that certain nations, such as Spain or England, could not make claims to the term of school, whereas for Richardson (1725), the latter was based on the figure of Van Dyck. Each of these schools was then defined:

The School of Rome is attached mainly to drawing. The School of Venice to colouring. The School of Lombardy to expression. And the Flemish School to what is natural. The French School has varied its principles.

*(L'École de Rome s'est principalement attachée au dessein. L'École de Venise au coloris. L'École de Lombardie à l'expression. Et l'École Flamande au naturel. L'École Française a varié dans ses principes.)*

It was this principle of variety, that is, the absence of unity of style, that Abbé Du Bos had also retained when he noticed the diversity in schools and thus in manners, which all aimed to search for beauty but by different means (Du Bos, 1740, II, p. 178–179). This eclecticism thus rendered certain artists unclassifiable, as Giulio Mancini observed at the start of the 17th century (*Considerazioni sulla pittura*, 1617–1621), distinguishing four active schools in Rome: that of Caravaggio, that of the Caracci, that of Cavalier d'Arpin and, in last place, the artists that could not be attached to these schools, such as the Tuscans, Cigoli and Pasignano, the Genoese Castello, Baglione, etc. The concepts of *manner*, *character* and *style* were thus linked to that of school, and made it possible to explain in what the school excelled, which by concomitance would lead to an asymmetrical relationship between the different nations and artistic sites. Thus, when Félibien praised the manner of Correggio, already excellent in the treatment of figures which united roundness, force and beauty, or "*morbidezza*" in Italian, he added that the painter would have been better if he had worked

in Rome (*Entretiens*, I, 1666, p. 234–235). The superiority of the Roman school, recognised for triumphing in drawing, lay according to De Piles, in the training of the painters and the ancient models that they had to imitate (*Cours de peinture*, 1708, p. 158–159). But associating a style with a nation gave rise to another debate. Following on from Roger de Piles, Dezallier d’Argenville assimilated into the first edition of the *Abrégé* (1745) the German taste with its Gothic style, which was unacceptable for the German painter and theorist Christian Ludwig von Hagedorn, according to whom it was appropriate to make the distinction between the taste of a nation and an ancient style. This criticism was accepted by Dezallier d’Argenville in the second edition of the *Abrégé* (1762). The use of the term *school* became generalised with the rise in exhibitions and sales catalogues in the 18th century, then with the development of museums in the following century, where displaying works by school became one of the most common means of presentation in Europe. This approach, which was one of the methodological foundations of the discipline, *connoisseurship*, was also contested by the historiographer, preferring a history of the art “without names” (Wölfflin), and by the artists themselves, motivated by a desire for emancipation. The word *school* was replaced by the term *movement* in the 20th century, the contemporary definition of which, designating a group of artists from a given time and place, and a set of works that share a common aesthetic, ultimately resembles that of school in the 17th century.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Science  $\implies$  Art, Drawing  
 Science of a connoisseur  $\implies$  Criticism, Judgement  
 Sculpture  $\implies$  Fine arts  
 Sentiment  $\implies$  Pleasure, Spectator  
 Shadow  $\implies$  Chiaroscuro, Reflection  
 Shortening  $\implies$  Proportion

## SKETCH

fr.: *esquisse*  
 germ.: *Skizze*  
 nl.: *schets*  
 it.: *schizzo*  
 lat.: *adumbratio*

### Drawing, design, draught, painting

*The sketch is universal and is described or mentioned in France and England as a process essential for creation. It is effectively the first production of a drawing made by hand. Theoreticians, particularly in France, established its natural link with the imagination and memory, of which it appears to be the first practical emanation. It is marked by spontaneity and quickness of execution and, through these characteristics, it is the signature of the artist, an inimitable trace for copiers.*

The term sketch comes from the Italian *schizzo*, the etymology of which is recalled by Félibien (1676, p. 581): the word comes “from *squizzare*, which means to go outside, & spring up impetuously”. It is the equivalent of the “first thought” or simply “thought”, Italian terms (*primo pensiero*, *pensiero*) used only from the 17th century on. All theoreticians had a positive opinion of the sketch, which was never rejected as a waste, but on the contrary it was well understood and judged as the beginning and origin of the graphic process.

### The Origin of the Sketch: Imagination and Memory

Roger de Piles (1715, p. 70) delivered a very justly observed judgement on the value of the sketch. It clearly belongs to the genesis of a work. De Piles finely perceived in it that it is possible to understand the thoughts and conception of the artist because, within it, it reveals the nature, the personal touch, and the density of the lines drawn. The idea, thoughts and force of the imagination are revealed there. De Piles sensed that the sketch, or “*brouillard*” (Pader, 1657, n.p.), was neither a scrap nor an imperfection or incorrection, but rather a synthetic view in just a few lines of the form of the objects that the artist would develop in successive studies. It represents the first draft that springs from the imagination and is a condensed version

of the idea and thought at work on a support. The sketch is the first, original step that leads to the blossoming and completion of a work. Along with Hilaire Pader (1657), Dupuy du Grez (1699, p. 287) went further still: he recommended training oneself first in imagining the “first conception”, imprinting it in the memory and then, and only then, turning to the sketch so as to produce the most beautiful effects with the hand. The sketch proceeds with the help of both imagination and memory. In a way, it is a place in the memory that puts down on paper the thoughts from the imagination and thus “comforts” the memory (De Piles, 1708, p. 263–264). The main traits of the sketch established in the Renaissance were brought together: the primacy of imagination, an invocation of memory, and the guardian of fleeting thought. Leonardo da Vinci (1651, p. 4) had provided a few elements, and above all recommended noting these thoughts in a notebook to fix them in the memory. Forged in the soul and the spirit, the imagination supplements the imperfect lines of the sketch and brings it to life, animating it with the “life” that was lacking from the rough drawings (De Piles, 1677, p. 272).

#### Definition and Processes of the Sketch

The definition of the sketch was thus determined in relation to the faculties of imagination and memory. It was thus a production of the spirit executed with rudimentary instruments, such as a quill or stone. Its unformed, unpolished nature was not considered to be a failing. The main quality of the sketch was to identify, despite its imperfection and incorrection, a great deal of spirit and boldness (Dezallier d’Argenville, 1745–1755, p. XVII). The theoreticians added a touch of spirituality when they observed that the sketch was full of spirit. It was characterised by a spontaneous process and could not be corrected. On the contrary, it was a trace of the speed of execution encouraged by the fury (*furie*) of action (Félibien, 1676, p. 581). Dezallier d’Argenville (1745–1755, p. XVII) designated with the term *croquis*, and not *esquisse* (sketch), the mass effect of a form designed by free drawing. The term *masse* harks back to *macchia* (stain) or the only sketch of everything (*sola bozza del tutto*), which designates this mass effect often observed by the theoreticians since Vasari when characterising the sketch. These terms insist on the unformed, incomplete, rough aspect, but also praise the brevity, boldness and rapidity of spirit and hand when drawing in a very short amount of time and capturing the essence of the form seized



under the effect of inspiration, another notion implied by the term the “fire of the imagination” (*feu de l’imagination*) described by Roger de Piles (1708, p. 416–418) or that of fury (*furie*) by Félibien (1676, p. 581), a derivation of the neoplatonic fierceness of essence. The idea that the grand masters liked to use the sketch to express their thoughts is sometimes given as an example for understanding the utility of the sketch, and its necessity for assisting inspiration and imagination.

The sketch also represents the signature, seal and the authentic, indelible and original mark of the artist. As a fine connoisseur and major collector of drawings, Dezallier d’Argenville (1745–1755, p. XXX) admired the freeness of the hand (*franchise de la main*) that could not be imitated. A long letter from Filippo Baldinucci to the Marquis Vincenzo Capponi (1681) had already exposed, with plenty of arguments, the distinction between the original and the copy. The infinitesimal and imperceptible lines of an original remain inimitable to the extent that even the most faithful of copies is unable to reproduce them, as they belong only to their author. The sketch is thus the mark of truth and it distances itself from the false through its frankness and its simplicity. Jonathan Richardson (1719, p. 136) also remarked with resolution the absolute originality of sketches or “free works”.

#### Confusion between *esquisse* and *ébauche*

Apart from the term *croquis*, which is the equivalent of sketch and is the term used explicitly by Dezallier d’Argenville in particular, *ébauche* is often confused with *esquisse*, for example by Abraham Bosse (1667, p. 20) and François-Marie de Marsy (1756, I, p. 198) who generally used it to qualify the first ideas for a drawing or painting indiscriminately. Only Félibien (1676, p. 573) and above all Dupuy du Grez (1699, p. 26–248) provided a more precise definition, which was in relation to the first state of a painting, and not a drawing. Dupuy du Grez even detailed *ébauches* in sculpture, which he described after shaping of the form then sketched, that is, specified within its definitive contours. As for painting, it formulates the stages of the *ébauche* through application of different colours, through the outline of the contours and draping and, finally, through the preparation of the background of the painting. The sketch designates the first phase in the preparation of a painting, but does not really apply to a drawn sketch. The confusion between the two terms no doubt comes from the Italian terms *bozza* or *abbozzo*, used in particular by Vasari to designate the sketch or the compact,

rough and sometimes thick effect of a sketch. There remained several echoes of this among the theoreticians of the 17th and 18th centuries in France.

Lizzie BOUBLI

[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Bosse, 1667; Da Vinci, 1651; De Piles, 1677, 1708, 1715; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1752; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Félibien, 1676; Marsy, 1746; Pader, 1653 [1657]; Richardson, 1719.

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| Skill $\implies$ Painter, Practice<br>Sight $\implies$ Eye<br>Soul $\implies$ Mind/Spirit |
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## SPECTATOR, BEHOLDER, PUBLIC

fr.: *spectateur, public*  
 germ.: *Anschauer, Beschauer, Spektator, Publikum*  
 nl.: *aanshower, beshower*  
 it.: *spettatore*  
 lat.: *spectator*

**Public, eye, gaze, judgement, connoisseur, critic, lover of art, sentiment**

*The term spectator or beholder was relatively rare in the theory of art in the 17th century, which took more interest in the point of the view of the artist than the spectator. For this reason, the pleasure of the latter was intimately linked to his perception of the painter's creative act. On the contrary, in the writings of the 18th century, the spectator occupied an entirely new position. This corresponded on the one hand to the important role given to sentiment, which had supplanted judgement in the appreciation of a work, and on the other to the emergence of the notion of public, which marked the passage from the isolated beholder to that of a group.*

### From Judgement and the Eye to Sentiment

The way the spectator looked at a work depended greatly on his ability to understand the painter's intention, just as his judgement depended on the knowledge he might have of the different elements of the painting. Thus the writings, such as those of Bosse, described at length the relationship between the perspective used in the painting and the relief effects, the "sensation of the colours" (*sensation des couleurs*), so that he who looked at it might have a just idea of the subject (Bosse, 1667, p. 48–49). From the same perspective, Testelin insisted on the role of the painter, who had to ensure that all parties "competed together to form a just idea of the subject, in such a way that they might inspire in the mind of the beholders the emotions appropriate to this idea" (*concurrent ensemble à former une juste idée du sujet, en sorte qu'elles puissent inspirer dans l'esprit des regardans des émotions convenables à cette idée*, Testelin, s.d. [1693–1694], p. 1920). The writings on art thus aimed, through the description of the painter's practice, to educate the spectator. This was also valid for Sandrart's *Teutsche Academie* (1675). All the knowledge necessary for the painter

was also useful for the spectator. When associated with the experience of the eye developed through solid observation, this knowledge played a part in training his judgement and ability to distinguish an original from a copy. All the theorists insisted on the importance of instruction for identifying and reading history (De Piles, 1708, p. 6970), or for recognising whether or not a painting corresponded to the rules of the art (Goeree, 1670b, p. 116).

De Piles certainly did not refute this conception, but he introduced a new relationship between the painter and the spectator. This relationship was not based on knowledge, or even on a sensitive experience, but rather developed around the concept of enthusiasm. Junius had already granted importance to this quality, but at that time it referred to the expression of passions that had to arouse surprise in the heart of art lovers when the ideas were expressed in a living, ordered and gracious manner (1641, III, VI.5). Other theorists, such as Browne (1675, p. 44–46, 51) or Aglionby (1685, p. 101–102) insisted on the need for the spectator to feel the emotions that the painter had felt at the time of painting, and had put into his work. For others again, like Sandrart (1675, p. 62), they attributed this power in the painting to living expression. It was also the Truth that awakened enthusiasm for De Piles (1708, p. 6–8). Thanks to this quality which was common to both of them, the spectator let himself be “carried away suddenly, and despite himself, to the degree of Enthusiasm in which the Painter attracted him” (*enlever tout à coup, & comme malgré lui, au degré d’Enthousiasme où le Peintre l’a attiré*, 1708, p. 114–115). This conception marked a transformation in the role of the spectator. He no longer had to merely understand, but also be taken hold of, surprised and called out to by the painting (1708, p. 6, 8). While enthusiasm was “common to the Painter and the Spectator” (*commun au Peintre & au Spectateur*, 1708, p. 114–115), it nevertheless acted in a different manner: for the former, it revealed itself in the process that brought the imagination into play, and for the latter, it was born of immediacy. The parallel between the effect produced by the painting and the artifice sought by the painter also remained present for Dezallier d’Argenville (1745–1752, I, *Avertissement*, p. II): the pleasure of the spectator was born of the enthusiasm that the painter put into the creation of his work. The spectator no longer needed to know what the painter knew, “he merely has to abandon himself to his common sense to judge what he sees” (*il n’a qu’à s’abandonner à son sens commun pour juger de ce qu’il voit*, De Piles, 1677, p. 93–95).

If we continue to consider as necessary the fact of recognising the history, a distinction was made in the writings of the theorists between identification of the subject and the knowledge needed by the painters that the spectator also needed to have acquired to better appreciate the work. Between reason and pleasure, the debate was nevertheless not quite so clear-cut. The spectator's ability for appreciation could effectively intensify the pleasure. Du Bos insisted on the need to successfully guess the subject of a painting—if necessary by adding an inscription for the benefit of less scholarly spectators—because “one becomes quickly bored by looking, because the duration of the pleasures in which the mind does not take part is very short” (*on s'ennuie bientôt de regarder, parce que la durée des plaisirs où l'esprit ne prend point de part, est bien courte*, Du Bos, 1740, p. 8687).

But the French theorist was not a man of the past. Based on the notion of aesthetic sentiment, his conception remained anchored in the affirmation that the aim of a painting was to touch us. He thus assimilated a painting that pleased with a painting that was good: “Sentiment is a much better teacher if the work touches us and if it makes the impression on us that it must do, that all the dissertations composed by the critics, to explain the perfections and failings” (*Le sentiment enseigne bien mieux si l'ouvrage touche et s'il fait sur nous l'impression qu'il doit faire, que toutes les dissertations composées par les critiques, pour en expliquer les perfections et les defaults*, Du Bos, 1740, p. 323-325). Reason undoubtedly played a role, but it was only that of comforting the judgement of sentiment, or even of submitting to it. This sentiment linked to taste was both variable and universal:

There is in us a sense that is made to understand whether the cook has worked in accordance with the rules of his art. We taste the stew and even without knowing the rules, we know if it is good. The same is true for the works of the mind and paintings made to please us by touching us. It is this sixth sense that is inside us, even though we cannot see its organs. It is the part of us that judges on the impression that it feels, and which, to use the terms of Plato, pronounces without consulting the ruler and the compass.

*(il est en nous un sens fait pour connaître si le cuisinier a opéré suivant les règles de son art. On goûte un ragout et même sans connaître les règles, on connaît s'il est bon. Il en est de même des ouvrages de l'esprit et des tableaux faits pour nous plaire en nous touchant. C'est ce sixième sens qui est en nous, sans que nous voyions ses organes. C'est la portion de nous-*

*mêmes qui juge sur l'impression qu'elle ressent, et qui, pour me servir des termes de Platon, prononce sans consulter la règle et le compas).*

(Du Bos, 1740, p. 326)

The eye was thus considered as an instrument of sensible judgement. The aesthetic sentiment could thus be revealed before a work without the help of any knowledge which on the contrary disturbed, not to say blocked, the expression of this sentiment.

### From Spectator to Public: from Singular to Plural

The intensification of the role given to sentiment corresponded to the change in the status of the spectator. It was effectively no longer as much a question of the amateur spectator standing alone in front of a painting, as he was able to do in a *cabinet* or painter's studio such as that of Rubens, but of the public, essentially that present at the *Salons*. The social dimension to this concept was important, but it also corresponded to the transformation of a model. The learned art lover was replaced by a group of people whose qualities and expectations it was necessary to define. The essential postulate was that the fine arts could be appreciated by all, and its correlate was that one can better understand the beauty of a painting without being blocked by knowledge that disturbs our judgement. As a result, this led to a radical double rupture with the spectator-art lover who, thanks to the knowledge that he shared with the painter, aimed to enter into the intimacy of his creation, and this furthermore instituted an opposition between painters, that is, the people from the profession and the public. The latter were defined by Du Bos as "people who read, who are familiar with shows, who see and hear talk of paintings, or who have acquired in whatever manner, this discernment that one calls the taste for comparison" (*personnes qui lisent, qui connoissent les spectacles, qui voient et qui entendent parler de tableaux, ou qui ont acquis de quelque manière que ce soit, ce discernement qu'on appelle goût de comparaison*, 1740, p. 334–335). In the name of this ability, and although they often let themselves be deceived by "people who were art professionals" (*personnes qui font profession de l'art*), the judgements of the latter were more worthy of trust (Du Bos, 1740, p. 296–297). The public had become a real arbiter "of merit and talents" (*du mérite et des talents*) because it had acquired the freedom to judge on the basis of its tastes and knowledg (*parce qu'il a acquis la liberté de juger selon son goût et ses*

*connoissances*, Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1752, I, p. XIII). La Font de Saint-Yenne also based his opposition between the taste of painters and that of the public on the latter's freedom to use the language of truth (La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747, p. 6–7).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Aglionby, 1685; Bosse, 1667; Browne, 1669 [1675]; De Piles, 1677, 1708; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1752; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Goeree 1670 b; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; La Font de Saint-Yenne, 1747; Sandrart, 1675; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694].

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## STILL-LIFE

fr.: *nature morte*  
 germ.: *still-liegende Sachen, still-stehende Sachen*  
 nl.: *stilleven*  
 it.: *natura morta*

### Genre, subject, flower piece, fruit piece, animal

*It was only in 1750, in the words of art lover and art critic Guillaume Baillet de Saint-Julien, that the concept of nature morte (still life) was introduced into French theoretical and artistic terminology (Baillet de Saint-Julien, 1750, p. 23–24), in the context of the writing of Diderot and d’Alembert’s Encyclopédie. Furthermore, the expression could be interpreted as a sort of contradictory translation of its Germanic and English equivalents. Whilst the expression nature morte was indeed very widespread in French, as well as in the other Latin languages in the second half of the 18th century, on the contrary, the term used in Dutch was stilleven from the second third of the 17th century, or long after the appearance of the genre on painters’ easels (Beurs, 1692, p. 111–112, 115, 130; De Lairesse, 1712, vol. 2, p. 259–261, 268 [1787, p. 474–476, 484]).*

### A Silent and Inanimate Subject

Whilst we can find formulations similar to the Dutch term throughout the English- and German-speaking world: *still-life* in English (Aglionby, 1685, p. 21–23; Smith, 1692, p. 75–77; Richardson, 1719, p. 21–22, 44–45, 150–152), *Stil-leben* or *Stilliegend* in German (Beurs, 1693, p. 113, 116, 130), certain equivalent definitions could also be found in French vocabulary at the time.

The expression “vie coye”, or silent life, in particular appeared in the title of an engraving from 1649 by Conrad Waumans (1619-c.



1675) for his *Images de divers hommes d'esprit sublime*, adapted from a self-portrait of the Leidenaar painter David Bailly (1584–1657): “an extremely good Painter of portraits and silent life” (*un fort bon Peintre en pourtraicts et en vie coye*), a legend that Cornelis de Bie repeated in 1661 in his *Gulden Cabinet* (Bie, 1661, p. 271).

The term *still-leven*, evoking at once the fields of the living, immobility and silence, thus excluded all representations suggesting animation or sound, as well as any composition that removed it from its models of the materiality of nature. In 1675, Joachim von Sandrart thus spoke in his *Teutsche Academie* of immobile things (*still-stehende Sachen*) when characterising the work of the Leidenaar painter Cornelis de Heem (1631–1695), a specialist in fruit-based compositions (Sandrart, 1675, p. 318).

#### A late concept

We can only try to explain this lateness in the recent naming of a relatively ancient practice. It was effectively only very late in the day that anyone started to consider that the different paintings representing objects or inanimate beings could be grouped together in a single, generic category despite the growing variety in their subjects. Taking the image of a ripe orchard in a variety of manners through art, Samuel van Hoogstraten was one of the first Dutch theorists to use the neologism *stilleven* (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 75).

It is effectively necessary to specify to what extent the paintings that we refer to as *still life*, for want of a less anachronistic label, in reality presented an incredible iconographic and formal diversity, making complex any early attempt to identify common generic qualities.

In France, the name of the genre was based on description. La Mothe Le Vayer undoubtedly spoke of *grylles* or *ryparographos* (1648, p. 114–116), but just as the painters who practised this pictorial genre were called naturalists, dinner piece specialists, florists by Catherinot (1687, p. 16) or painters with a talent for flowers, fruit, etc., their works bore the name of the object that they represented: shells, fruit, flowers or “full kitchens, excepting the cookware, with all sorts of meat” (*cuisines remplies, outre la batterie, de toutes sortes de viande*, La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648, p. 114–116).

### Variety and Porosity in the Subjects

A large number of subjects, more or less generic and indistinct, were effectively collected together under this name. Many of them were, in addition, identified at the time by different names, which varied depending on the periods and were often spelled in a rather inventive manner, and this, in addition to the famous vanities (*vanitas*), of which the religious and moral content had to a great extent disappeared between the 15th and 17th centuries to take on a more secular perspective in the form of common visual places.

Nevertheless, not all the current names were wrong, and the idea of the term *trompe-l'œil*, which appeared in France in 1800, was present at the time in that of *bedrieger*, defining a deceptive subject. For the still life genre thus formed in reality a galaxy of subjects, among which it was possible to distinguish *bloemstukjes* from *fruitagies*, or floral compositions from those featuring fruit, *ontbijtjes*, or breakfasts, from *banketjes*, or banquets as well as the later *pronkstillieven*, or “pompous still lifes” (*natures mortes d'apparat*), to define the most vast and complete compositions, often produced later in the Flemish studios.

Furthermore, certain subjects could focus on other categories contemporary to the still life or genre painting, depending on whether or not they made use of human figures: this was the case for example of smoking (*tabakje*). All these subjects encountered considerable success among Western art lovers in the 17th century and could, for this reason, present certain iconographic overlaps, which further complicated all simplistic delimitation into generic categories.

All of these subjects also grouped together many specialists among artists, as they were capable of being attached to specific expectations, sometimes even highly localised in time or space, thus contributing to the development of successive fashions throughout the 17th century.

Still life painting was extremely successful in the Netherlands, as well as in France, even though it occupied the lowest place in the hierarchy of genres established by the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture (1668, *Préface aux Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture pendant l'année 1667*, p. XV). But this hierarchy was not as strict as it appeared, and was transgressed, even within the Académie, by the quality criterion which meant that a still life could even be better than a history painting of mediocre quality. Although he defended the truth, De Piles did not devote any chapter of his *Cours*

to still lifes (1708). On the other hand, Diderot fully rehabilitated the genre, starting with the works of Chardin (1699–1779):

He is the one who hears the harmony of colours and reflections. Oh, Chardin! It is not white that you mix on your palette; it is the very substance of objects, it is the air and the light that you take and put on to the tip of your paintbrush and that you attach to your canvas.

*(C'est celui-ci qui entend l'harmonie des couleurs et des reflets. O Chardin! Ce n'est pas du blanc que tu broies sur ta palette: c'est la substance même des objets, c'est l'air et la lumière que tu prends à la pointe de ton pinceau et que tu attaches sur la toile.)* (Salon de 1763, X, p. 194–195)

Léonard POUY

[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Aglionby, 1685; Baillet De Saint-Julien, 1750; Beurs, 1692; Cathérinot, 1687; De Bie, 1661; De Laresse, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1708; Diderot, 1763; Félibien, 1668; Hoogstraten, 1678; La Mothe Le Vayer, 1648; Richardson, 1719; Sandrart, 1675, 1679; Smith, 1692.

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Story  $\implies$  History

## STUDIO

fr.: *atelier*  
 germ.: *Malzimmer, Malstube, Werkstatt*  
 nl.: *kammer*  
 it.: *studio*

### **Workshop, effect, distance, light, lay-man, model, paint (to), tool**

*The many representations of artists' studios since that of Apelles, described by Pliny the Elder, meant that the studio has been defined in a triple relationship combining creative area, learning area, and social area for the painter and his patron. There were effectively artists painting or sculpting, apprentices mixing colours or learning to draw, and art lovers examining the work of the master. Showing artistic activity in the interior and/or exterior décor of their homes played a part in affirming the nobility of the art, and recognising their status of artist. This was particularly true for the houses of artists in 16th century Antwerp (Cornelis van Dalem House, c. 1530–1573/1576, or Frans Floris House, 1516/1520–1570), which imitated Italian models. The decorations of these houses, initially allegories of painting or painters, were used as real commercial strategies aiming for the social recognition of painters. The Rubens House on the Wapper in Antwerp, which was designed as a gallery with a studio that art lovers could visit to watch the artist at work, is an excellent example. The engraving by Abraham Bosse, The Noble Painter, in which the artist is seen in his studio, seated in front of his easel, palette in hand, the walls decorated with paintings, had the same aim of highlighting the close link that the painter had with art lovers. But the studio also had to be adapted to the painter's activity. It was thus a sort of place for pictorial experimentation for which it was necessary to specify the conditions. It was to this that the discourse on art was attached.*

### Light and Space: the Qualities of the Studio for Producing an Effect

Engravings that illustrated studios in books showed a windowless area in which the painter was working, before his easel in the process of painting (Bate, *Mysteries of nature and art*, 1634, title page; Salmon,

*Polygraphice*, 1672, title page (reproduced identically in *Excellency of the pen . . .* 1688). These engravings no doubt do not really represent the absolute truth. On the other hand, in many representations of painters' studios, whether they were rich or poor, the room was lit by an opening, most of the time on the left, or by several windows. The space was sometimes relatively large, allowing several artists and apprentices to work simultaneously; the ceilings were nevertheless low, which raises the question of how large-sized works were painted. A handwritten text by the French painter Pierre Le Brun in 1635 (1849, p. 759–770), clearly shows the advantages for painters regarding the incidence of light sources on the forms represented. Although the different impacts of daylight, backlight, lighting from above or below were described, the preference was clearly for almost natural lighting which situated the shadows in relation to the forms. Side windows thus provided a gentle, natural light, different from that projected by an opening placed in the upper part of the wall of the studio. This disposition appeared in many works, in which the effects of *chiaroscuro* were the most pronounced. Goeree also took an interest in light for drawing volumes and showing bodies in the slightest detail. He insisted on the coincidence between a flat shadow and daylight (*Tecken-Konst*, 1670b, p. 55–56). To achieve it, a high, natural light was necessary, sourced from a north-facing opening.

The artists of the 17th century were not the first to reflect on the disposition of the studio, and the light that penetrated it, to obtain the effect they sought. Leonardo da Vinci had already written on this subject. His remarks were included in the *Traitté* published in 1651, and were the origin of the reflections that painters had on this subject. Da Vinci proposed that the window not be with small panes or have transoms, and be covered in oil paper “to not clutter the daylight with a confusion of shaded lines” (*pour ne pas encombrer le jour d'une confusion de lignes ombreuses*) which would hinder the light and do harm to the work (1651, CCXCVI, p. 97). Goeree took much of his inspiration from the principles given by the Italian painter (1651, chap. XXVII et XXXIV), not to define the studio, but to describe the light and its incidence on shadows (1670, p. 63–65). On the contrary, Sandrart took up all the suggestions made by da Vinci and grouped them together in his chapter *Von dem Licht und Mahlzimmer* (1675, chap. XI, p. 80). The light had to come from the right, the middle and the highest part of the room, and the opening should measure five or six feet on each side or, better still, be round in shape. The light source should make it possible to bring in a second source from below if the painting required

a great deal of light. It was preferable for the light to come from the north. If the studio could not accommodate this requirement, and there was only a south-facing window, it should be equipped with *plafeturi*, made from oil paper, so that the sun did not modify the form. These precise recommendations came directly from chapter 27 of da Vinci's *Traitté (A quelle hauteur on doit prendre son poinct de lumière pour desseigner sur naturel)*. These recommendations were nevertheless not limited to plans or instructions; they were part of a real reflection on the relationship between the quality of the place and that of the work. For Sandrart, a room was appropriate when all its parts and the painting as a whole could have "a perfect, beautiful light, and that it could provide for each thing decency, shadow and reflection" (*ein voll-kommen-schönes Licht haben und jedem Ding den Wolstand, Schatten und Widerschein geben kann*, 1675, p. 81). The difference between the light from the north, which was more constant, and that from the south, which could be adjusted with frames and papers to create greater animation or less cold tones, was mentioned in Watelet's *Encyclopédie* (I, p. 45–46), as was the need to modulate the light in relation to the size of the painting and the effect on the models. Taking as example an outdoor scene requiring a large quantity of light, Watelet also conformed to the idea, guaranteeing a natural effect, that there was a direct relationship between appropriate lighting in the studio and the light of the painting.

For Sandrart, a studio also had to be large. This was not, as suggested by Watelet, so as to welcome large numbers of pupils or to be able to paint large formats (paintings for churches, châteaux, galleries etc.), but to be better able to judge the effect of a painting. Da Vinci had already insisted on the need to paint in a large space, determined by the size of the model to be painted (Vinci, 1651, chap. VI, p. 6). Sandrart criticised the ancient (essentially German) painters for working in studios that were too small which made it impossible to position the model at a certain distance, thus allowing the painter to step back (Sandrart 1675, p. 80; 1679, p. 20). Bosse also gave advice to painters on how to position the model or manikin, and to position oneself at the same time to be able to both see and imitate (1667, p. 22). Following on from da Vinci, Sandrart went further still, attributing to the quality of the studio the painter's ability to bring life, force and truth to his painting.

Positioning oneself at an appropriate distance certainly allows the eye to find the right proportions, but painters also had to be able to move around, step back so as to examine both the model and the

work in progress. This corresponded to an aesthetic conception that was found with diverse modalities in painters as different from each other as Poussin (1594–1665), Rubens (1577–1640) or Rembrandt (1606–1669). Perhaps to compensate for a small-sized studio, the former ordered his figures on a plank in a box that he positioned at an appropriate distance (Le Blond de la Tour, 1669, p. 38–39). According to De Piles, Rubens climbed on to the gallery in his studio to observe the effect of his paintings (1670, p. 300). Rembrandt represented himself observing his painting from a distance (*The Artist in his Studio*, 1629, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts), and this distance was further accentuated by the difference in scale between him and the easel. Although the approach—looking into the distance—was the same for all three artists, they almost certainly did not consider their works in the same way. What they nevertheless did have in common was a new conception of painting based on the search for natural effects, even if this was not unequivocal. This conception therefore did not touch on the subject represented but, thanks to the combined effect of the light and surrounding area, rather the manner of doing it which led to the effect produced. A studio that conformed thus became a necessary condition.

### Tools

The studio was also a “laboratory”, to use the expression adopted by Marsy (1746). Except in relation to colours, this dimension of the work space was rarely mentioned in theoretical writings. These writings, particularly those from France and England, nevertheless gave great importance to the textual or figurative description of the tools of the painter, the drawer or the engraver. Many chapters were thus devoted to the painters’ tools. For Bate, the most important was the easel, of which he presented a sketch (1634, p. 116). William Salmon cited the easel, palette, frame, canvas, brushes, colours and maulstick (1672, p. 163–164). Félibien presented a rather different list, on which featured a grinding stone, knife, palette, easel, brush and brush cleaner, cup and maulstick or arm-rest (1676, pl. LXII, p. 414–415). Easel, brushes, palette and brush cleaners were also the subject of detailed, individual descriptions in De Piles’ *Premiers éléments de peinture* (1684). The use of the brush cleaner, a tin plate dish containing oil for cleaning brushes, was thus presented in detail (1684, p. 57), in the same way as the colours that needed to be respected on the palette: white lead, yellow ochre, brown red, lake, stil-de-grain, green earth, umber, bone

black (1684, p. 41, 47, 60). It is almost certainly not necessary to consider these indications as being systematic practices. Marshall Smith underlined how the palette and easel had to be adapted to what one wanted to paint (1692, p. 71–75). Naturally, the plates illustrating the engraver's studio were also common, in Bosse's *Manières de graver* (1645) and in England (1688, p. 56, p. 81).

The studio as the place in which the painter, sculptor and other workers worked (Félibien, 1676, p. 481) was a definition to which Watelet could totally adhere. He also accompanied his notice with engraved plates, featuring tools. But, as painting is an art of illusion, and is also an object of pleasure, he insisted on the precise position that a painting had to have, and on the need for appropriate lighting in order to be clearly seen. The qualities of a studio, until then recognised for the painter to allow him to paint well, were thus extended to art lovers.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Anonyme, 1668 [1688]; Bate, 1634; Bosse, 1645, 1667; Da Vinci, 1651; De Piles, 1677, 1684; Félibien, 1676; Goeree, 1670 b; Le Blond De La Tour, 1669; Le Brun P., 1635 [1849 (reed. 1967)]; Marsy, 1746; Salmon, 1672; Sandrart, 1675, 1679; Smith, 1692; Watelet, Levesque, 1788–1791.

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Study  $\Rightarrow$  Drawing, Sketch  
 Stuff  $\Rightarrow$  Drapery

## STYLE

fr.: *style*  
 germ.: *Stil*  
 lat.: *stilus*

**Goût, art, manière, école, main, écriture, pictoresque, mode**

*The concept of style appeared as a metaphor in the 17th century, and only began to dominate progressively during the 18th century. It still never completely replaced the concept of manner.*

To talk of the “style” of Giotto (c. 1266–1337) or Hieronymus Bosch (v. 1450–1516) is to commit an anachronism, as well as to simplify reality. The concept of style as applied to the arts effectively appeared late in European artistic literature. It was initially presented as a metaphor by which art theorists suggested comparing the “manner” of painters and the “style” of orators and poets. Hilaire Pader was one of the first theorists to sketch out the outlines of an analogy between the manner of painting of artists and the manner of writing of poets: “Manner is like the Style of the Poets. [. . .] as many Styles among the Poets, as there are manners among the Painters” (*Maniere, c’est comme le Stille parmy les Poëtes. [. . .] autant de Stiles parmy les Poëtes, autant de manieres entre les Peintres*). To do so, he used above all the texts of Giovan Paolo Lomazzo, who “revealed the conformity that can be found between the Works of the most famous Painters in Italy, and the Styles of the most excellent Poets of that same nation” (*fait voir la conformité qui se trouve entre les Ouvrages des plus fameux Peintres d’Italie & les Stiles des plus excellents Poëtes de la mesme nation*, 1657, “Explication des mots et termes de la Peinture, qui se trouvent marquez de Paraffes”, n.p.). This analogy thus appeared to be relatively recent: in 1662, Roland Fréart de Chambray still affirmed that the word “style” “is not a Term that is particularly attributed to

Painting” (*n’est pas un Terme particulièrement affecté à la Peinture*, p. 54); and in 1685, William Aglionby mentioned the “different manners” (*différentes manières*) when comparing them, “as one may call them, Stiles of Painting” (*comme on pourrait les appeler, des styles de peinture*, 1685, p. 121–122). It was nevertheless not until the middle of the 18th century that this metaphor became a method tool, particularly for Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d’Argenville:

A painter’s manner of drawing can be distinguished like the character of the writing, and better than the style of an author. [ . . . ] Manner signifies a means of operating; it is a painter’s technique, his style. [ . . . ] These style characteristics of a painter, these marks of his writing, still need to be accompanied by his manner of thinking, and a certain touch of the spirituality that characterises him.

*(La manière de dessiner d’un peintre se distingue comme le caractère de l’écriture, & mieux que le style d’un auteur. [ . . . ] La manière s’entend de la façon d’opérer; c’est le faire d’un peintre, c’est son style. [ . . . ] Ces caractères du style d’un peintre, ces marques de son écriture veulent encore être accompagnés de sa manière de penser, & d’une certaine touche spirituelle qui le caractérise.* (1745–1752, I, p. XX, XXVIII)

Contrary to the appearances and habits of positivist art history, the almost organic identification of an artist with a style was only accepted by some of the art theorists of the 17th and 18th centuries. For Hilaire Prader, the “styles” of poets “are various, and the Manners [of painters] also” (*sont divers, les Manieres [des peintres] le sont aussi*). But this diversity only distinguished artists from each other. Each work, on the other hand, was distinguished by a “style”, corresponding to the “hand”, or the “manner” of its author: “I know that this painting is by a given hand. This painter follows the manner of that painter, etc.” (*je cognois que ce tableau est de telle main par la maniere. Un tel suie la maniere d’un tel, &c.*, 1657, “Explication des mots et termes de la Peinture, qui se trouvent marquez de Paraffes”, n.p.). This was also the idea defended by Jonathan Richardson, who spoke of the “great style” of certain paintings by Michelangelo (1475–1664) (Richardson, 1719, p. 122–124) or Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665) (1719, p. 79–80).

For other authors, the concept of style could be simplified to this point, and needed in part to be distinguished from that of manner. According to William Aglionby, the word “style” should be understood in its rhetorical or poetic sense. Just as the style of an orator or a poet refers to the manner in which he says or writes a word, a painter’s style describes the way in which he paints a given pattern or figure:

[The Invention] is indeed the most difficult part of it, as depending intirely upon the Spirit and Genius of the Painter, who can express things no otherwise than as he conceives them, and from thence come the different Manners; or, as one may call them, Stiles of Painting; some Soft and Pleasing, others Terrible and Fierce, others Majestick, other Low and Humble, as we see in the stile of poets; and yet all Excellent in their Kinds. (1685, p. 121–122)

In other words, whilst a mediocre artist confines himself to his style, a great artist will give each object that he represents the style that corresponds to it.

These remarks were particularly important when it was a question of dealing with the types of subject that, like the portrait, still life or landscape, were based less on their inherent qualities than on the manner in which they were represented. In this case, the “style of execution” (*style d’exécuter*) was a “style of thought” (*style de penser*, 1708, p. 258) or a “character of writing” (*caractère d’écrire*, Coypel, 1732, p. 26). When, for example, the French art lover distinguished in the field of landscapes the “heroic style”, the “pastoral or rural style” and the combination of these two styles, he was not referring to individual styles, but different sorts of invention and execution (1708, p. 201): the “Heroic style is a composition of objects which in their genre take from Art and Nature all that one or the other can produce that is great and extraordinary” (*style Heroïque est une composition d’objets qui dans leur genre tirent de l’Art & de la Nature tout ce que l’un & l’autre peuvent produire de grand & d’extraordinaire*), whilst the “pastoral style is a representation of the Country that appears much less cultivated than abandoned to the strangeness of Nature alone” (*style champêtre est une representation des Pais qui paroissent bien moins cultivés qu’abandonnés à la bizarerie de la seule Nature*, p. 201–203). Certain painters had a natural tendency for one style rather than the other; but universal painters had to be able to master them too.

Jan BLANC

[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

## Sources

Aglionby, 1685; Coypel, 1732; De Piles, 1708; Dezallier d’Argenville, 1745–1752; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Lomazzo, 1584; Pader, 1649, 1653 [1657]; Richardson, 1719.

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Subject  $\implies$  Choice, Genre, History

## SUBLIME

fr.: *sublime*  
 germ.: *Erhabenheit*  
 nl.: *waarlijk groots, hoogstatelijkheid*  
 it.: *sublime*  
 lat.: *sublimis*

**Astonishment, elevation, enthusiasm, genius, grace, I know not what (*je-ne-sais-quoi*), magnificence, marvel, perspicuity, taste, splendor, sublimity, wonder**

*Originally, the sublime is a rhetorical concept that finds its main source in the treatise *Peri hupsous* (On the Sublime), probably written in the first century AD by an anonymous author, who is generally referred to as Longinus. The importance of *On the Sublime* resides in the fact that it deals with the strong persuasive and emotional effect of speech or literature on the listener or reader. It addresses the question of how language can move us deeply, how it can transport, overwhelm, and astonish the reader or listener.*

### Reception of ps.-Longinus' *On the Sublime*

For a long time, it was assumed that the sublime appeared on the stage of modern criticism only after Nicolas Boileau's 1674 translation of *On the Sublime*. However, since the 1950s scholars showed how the reception and dissemination of *On the Sublime* fueled rhetorical and poetical discussions from the mid-sixteenth century onward. Marc

Fumaroli even considered *On the Sublime* as a kind of “shadow-text” that from the very beginning accompanied the reception of Aristotle’s *Poetics* in the Republic of Letters. The translation of Longinus by Boileau is by no means a beginning that would be completed by Edmund Burke’s *Philosophical Inquiry* (1756) and Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* (1790), but a culmination of earlier ideas on the sublime and the effect of literature.

Although Longinus and many of his seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century commentators describe the sublime as an effect of texts, the use of the sublime in that time is not necessarily limited to the domain of literature or speech alone. It has a much larger scope. The sublime does not operate here as a strictly codified concept, but is much more floating and often operates within a network of other concepts that are not confined to the field of texts. The sublime’s effect of elevation bears similarities with the notion of magnificence and splendor. Its astonishing character is regularly paired with the concept of *le merveilleux*. Thus the sublime is closely linked to the overwhelming, dumbfounding, and breathtaking experience of encountering someone or something of pure marvel and wonder. Its mysterious and inexplicable nature is often explained as *le je-ne-sais-quoi* or can relate to human contact with the divine, e.g. *sacer horror*. Due to those varieties in the concept’s meanings and scope, the most recent scholarship on the sublime in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries suggests then to rethink the sublime from an “transmedial” perspective that signals the overwhelming and transporting experiences of different kinds, be they in literature, in the visual arts, in music and performing arts, in religion, in science or in the experience of nature.

### The Sublime in the Arts

Franciscus Junius was the first theoretician to use *On the Sublime* in a treatise on the visual arts. In his *De pictura veterum* (Latin edition, 1637; English edition, 1638; Dutch edition, 1641) he primarily invokes Longinus’ concept of *phantasia*. As Longinus’ poet, Junius’ painter gets inspired by mental images or *phantasiai*. These elevate him/her to the heavenly realm and strongly urge him/her to render these extraordinary heights in works of art. An irresistible and at the same time unaccountable force drives the urge to create. On its turn, the sublime painting that results from this overwhelming experience stimulates the viewer in a most powerful way to start a process of

intense imagination. The viewer can have the same mental images that the artist had in his mind during his experience with the sublime. Thus the elevated subject of the painting comes to life in the viewer and therefore produces an experience that is no longer restricted to the moment depicted, nor to a visual sensation. Junius' influence was widespread and references to his use of the Longinian sublime can be found among many contemporary and later theoreticians such as Samuel van Hoogstraten in the Dutch Republic, Roger de Piles in France, or Jonathan Richardson in England.

In his *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkunst* (1678) Samuel van Hoogstraten writes that he follows Junius quoting Longinus (*Junius uit Longinus*) in defining the sublime, or what Junius and Hoogstraten call *waarlijk groots* (Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 179). "That is great indeed which doth still returne into our thoughts, which we can hardly or rather not at all put out of our minde, but the memorie of it sticketh close in us and will not be rubbed out: esteeme that also to be a most excellent and true magnificence, which is liked always and by all men" (Junius, 1638, 3.1.15 quoting Longinus 7.3f). Hoogstraten explicitly refers to this passage from Junius to point at the fact that the *phantasia* of the reader of a text or viewer of a work of art can be compared. The images appearing in their minds thanks to sublime poetry or work of art lead to a straightforward and unforgettable, even an inerasable and inescapable experience. Moreover, the experience that the poem or painting evoke is universal, as it addresses everyone in a most overwhelming way.

### The Term Sublime

Junius, nor art theoreticians from the Dutch Republic as Hoogstraten, use the term sublime to translate Longinus' *hypsos*, but use terms as *magnificentie* (magnificence) and *waarlijk groot* (truly great) or the neologism *hoogstatelijkheid* (highness). Thanks to French and English art theoreticians of whom Roger de Piles is most prominent, the term sublime (from the Latin adjective *sublimis* pointing at the lofty or elevated position of someone or something) starts to operate in art theory and this in the wake of Boileau's 1674 translation of Longinus, his *Traité du sublime ou du merveilleux dans le discours*. Piles points at the fact that *le sublime* and *le merveilleux* are synonyms (*Idée du peintre parfait*, 1715, p. 27). As Junius and Hoogstraten, Piles sees himself obliged to legitimize the appropriation from a poetical to an

art theoretical context. Relying on the predominant *ut pictura poesis dictum*, he points repeatedly at the fact that “le sublime s’y [dans la Peinture] découvre aussi sensiblement que dans la Poésie” (*Cours de peinture*, 1708, p. 468).

De Piles, moreover, builds further on Junius’ appropriation of Longinus’ *phantasia* in the poet to define the ideal painter as a genius (*génie/ingenium*). He points at the great importance of the first phase in the creation of a painting, the *inventio*, in which the subject is defined in a mental image. Therefore, true geniuses can go beyond mere earthly observation and memory, they “s’élèvent au sublime”, thus being able to create a work of art that brings the viewer to the extraordinary heights they have witnessed (*Cours de peinture*, 1708, p. 61–63). In first instance, Piles praises Rubens as a true genius: “la perfection dans le genre sublime & dans les sujets extraordinaires ne se trouve que dans les tableaux de Rubens” (*Dissertation sur les ouvrages des plus fameux peintres*, 1681, p. 73). Thus, from the end of the seventeenth century onwards, the sublime becomes an increasingly important concept to evaluate the effect of specific painters and specific works of art.

However, the more prominent the sublime comes to the fore as an art theoretical concept, the more it is used to praise a rich diversity of artists and art works for their overwhelming impact on the viewer. The sublime is no longer restricted to history painting as in Junius, but is broadened to landscape painting (Poussin, 1594–1667) and portraiture (Van Dyck, 1599–1641). Very influential was Richardson by putting that “The Sublime (. . .) must be Marvellous, and Surprizing, It must strike vehemently upon the Mind, and Fill, and Captivate it Irresistably” (*Two Discourses*, 1719, p. 34–36). His emphasis on the impact of painting enables him to evaluate Michelangelo’s Great Style and Raphael’s Noble Ideas, as well as Van Dyck’s Expressions as sublime. Moreover, in a remarkable ekphrasis of Rembrandt (1606–1669) depicting “a Death-Bed in one Quarter of a Sheet of Paper in two Figures with few Accomagnements”, Richardson pointed at the fact that the sublime can be found in a simple drawing:

’Tis a Drawing, I have it. And here is an Instance of an Important Subject, Impress’d upon our Minds by such Expedients, and Incidents as display an Elevation of Thought, and fine Invention; and all this with the Utmost Art, and with the greatest Simplicity; That being more Apt, at least in this Case, than any Embellishment whatsoever.

(*Of the Sublime*, 1725, p. 251–253)

We can see how the influence of the Longinian sublime in early modern art theory was constitutive in understanding and conceptualizing the creation of a work of art, but always with its effect on the beholder in mind. As such, the emergence of the Longinian sublime in art theory throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries lay the grounds for a more general shift from art theory deeply influenced by rhetoric and poetics to the emergence of aesthetics. A bit provocatively, but not without grounds, Ann Delehanty even suggest that the birth of aesthetics did not so much occur with Alexander Baumgarten's *Aesthetica* in 1750, but that the essential shift from rhetoric and poetics to aesthetics—or from “judgement to sentiment”—exactly took place when seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century art theoreticians in close interaction with literary theoreticians rediscovered and appropriated the importance of the Longinian sublime.

Stijn BUSSELS & Bram VAN OOSTVELDT

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| <p>Symmetry <math>\implies</math> Beauty, Proportion<br/>         Sympathy <math>\implies</math> Agreement, Beauty</p> |
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# T

## TASTE

fr.: *goût*  
germ.: *Geschmack*  
nl.: *smaak*  
it.: *gusto, gunst*  
lat.: *gustus*

**Gust, school, style, manner, hand, knowledge, judgement, prone-ness, inclination, pleasure, good gusto, good manner, bad taste**

*The Latin adage says, "Of tastes and colours there is nothing to be disputed". This was not, however, the opinion of the art theorists of the modern age who believed that it was possible to define taste or tastes, and who placed taste at the heart of the evaluative practices of criticism.*

The concept of taste is complex because it is polysemic. The authors that discussed the subject were not always in agreement on the definition that they gave it, with three definitions prevalent, particularly in art theory.

The first was descriptive. It assimilated taste to the very nature of each artist (Bosse, 1649, p. 37; Piles, 1677, p. 35–37; Piles, 1708, p. 158–159; Richardson, 1719, p. 44–45; Du Bos, 1740, p. 479–480; Batteux, 1746, p. 61–63, 76–78). Taste, in this sense, was

a disposition of the mind which, depending on its force, and the precision of one's thoughts, regards things in such a manner that one always sees the most beautiful, and gives an agreeable turn to all that one wishes to do.

*(une disposition de l'esprit, qui, selon sa force, & la netteté de ses pensées, regarde les choses d'une telle manière, qu'il en voit toujours le plus beau, & donne un tour agréable à tout ce qu'il veut faire.)*

(Félibien, 1672, t. II, p. 61)

There were thus as many types of taste as there were temperaments, which could also be "influenced" by the countries in which the artists were born or trained (Audran, 1683, *Préface*, n.p.; Du Bos, 1740, p. 394–396; Dezallier d'Argenville, 1745–1755, t. I, p. xxiv–xxv). The artists of the French and German Renaissance had an "inclination" and "taste" for "fine manners" (*manières finies*) and the works needed "to be seen from up close" (*à être vues de très près*, Bosse, 1649, p. 43) whilst the Venetian painters of the same generation preferred a freer, less meticulous brushstroke. Similarly, Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665) and Pietro da Cortona (1596–1669) presented "the highest degree of excellence" (*le plus haut degré d'excellence*) in the art of painting, even though they were "different in Tastes or manner; one, touched by the Taste of excellent Antiquity and Raphael, the other by a large part of the other tastes or manners" (*différents en Gousts ou maniere; l'un, sur ceux qui sont touchez du Goust du bel Antique & du Raphaël; L'autre, sur une bonne partie des autres Gousts ou manieres*, Bosse, 1649, p. 45).

These reasons explain why it appeared in principle difficult to give a hierarchy for taste—it would mean wanting to give a hierarchy to men and placing the quantitative over the qualitative. Taken and believed in this sense, all tastes, like all opinions (Bosse, 1667, p. 12), could be found in nature.

The second definition of taste was technical. It was also a question of taste when talking of the different rules that a painter used to respond to the constraints and problems that he encountered in a work. This taste thus corresponded to "the way in which the mind is able to envisage things, depending on whether it is well turned or not; that is, whether he has conceived a good or bad idea. And that the good Taste of a beautiful Work is a conformity of the parts with their whole, and of the whole with perfection" (*la manière dont l'esprit est capable d'envisager les choses selon qu'il est bien ou mal tourné; c'est à dire, qu'il en a conçu une bonne ou mauvaise idée. Et que le bon Goust dans un bel Ouvrage est une conformité des parties avec leur tout, & du tout avec la*

*perfection*, Piles, 1677, p. 37–38). For this reason, it was “to Arts what Intelligence is to the Sciences” (*dans les Arts ce que l’Intelligence est dans les Sciences*), explained Charles Batteux (1746, p. 55–56), who also spoke of a feeling for the rules of art: “taste is knowledge of the rules through feeling” (*le goût est une connoissance des regles par le sentiment*), which “will guide the genius in the invention of the parts, which will dispose them, unite them, polish them: it is this, in a word, that will be the organiser, and almost the worker” (*guidera le génie dans l’invention des parties, qui les disposera, qui les unira, qui les polira: c’est lui, en un mot, qui sera l’ordonnateur, & presque l’ouvrier*, 1746, p. 97–99).

Certain authors nevertheless did not accept this definition, as they judged it too similar to that of “manner”:

One says, Here is a Work of great Taste, to mean that all within it is great and noble; that the parts are pronounced and freely drawn; that the attitudes of the heads contain nothing lowly for their kind; that the folds and draperies are ample, and that the light and shade are greatly extended. In this meaning, one often confuses Taste with Manner, and one says all the same, Here is a Work of great Manner.

*(L’on dit, Voila un Ouvrage de grand Goust, pour dire, Que tout y est grand & noble; que les parties sont prononcées & dessinées librement; que les airs de testes n’ont rien de bas chacun dans son espece; que les plis des draperies sont amples, & que les jours & les ombres y sont largement étendus. Dans cette signification l’on confond souvent Goust avec Maniere & l’on dit tout de mesme: Voila un Ouvrage de grande Manière).*

(De Piles, 1668, “Glossaire”, n.p.)

The third definition of taste was normative (De Piles, 1715, p. 27). In this case, it was no longer the tastes of men that needed to be inventoried and distinguished, but taste (singular), considered as a universal category, that needed to be defined:

When he [the painter] knows, and he expresses well in his works, all that is the most beautiful in Nature, it is said that he has good taste. And if he does not know of what consists the beauty of bodies, and he does not represent them in accordance with the beautiful Idea that the ancient Painters and Sculptors had, it is said that it is not of good taste, and good manner.

*(Lorsqu’il [le peintre] connoist, & qu’il exprime bien dans ses ouvrages ce qu’il y a de plus beau dans la Nature, on dit que ce qu’il fait est de bon goust. Et s’il ignore en quoy consiste la beauté des corps, & qu’il ne les represente pas selon la belle Idée que les anciens Peintres & Sculpteurs ont eüe, on dit que cela n’est pas d’un bon goust, & de bonne manière.)*

(Félibien, 1676, p. 609)

Can these three definitions be reconciled? Almost certainly, but only on the condition that two ideas be abandoned. The first is the existence of universal good taste, which all artists should seek in their works. This universality is impossible, as all taste corresponds to a preference or inclination specific to each individual. It is “an Idea that follows the inclination that Painters have for certain things” (*une Idée qui suit l'inclination que les Peintres ont pour certaines choses*, De Piles, 1668, *Glossaire*, n.p.). It is the reason for which, when a painting is said to be in “good” or “bad taste”, it is in reality the author that is in question (De Piles, 1677, p. 35–37), as well as the spectators.

Even between the works of a single artist, it is rarely possible to observe homogenous taste, systematically applied in the same manner. Taste can change in the course of a career: borrowing that of the master in one’s early works and then moving away from it in the later ones (Richardson, 1719, p. 122–124). Taste is effectively as much a given as it is a gift. Although it depends on the innate character of the artist, it is above all formed during his apprenticeship, with his contact with the masters and models (Bosse, 1667, p. 1). It is thus important that young artists be employed from the outset to imitate good models, particularly given that, once taste has been forged, it is almost impossible to lose it (De Piles, 1684, p. 16). If Correggio (c. 1489–1534) had been trained in Rome, his drawing would have been better, but he would without doubt not have developed his imagination and the richness of his colouring that he acquired in Parma (Félibien, 1666, *2<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 233–234). As for those who did train in Rome, they were also able to develop good or bad taste there, depending on the models that they privileged (De Piles, 1677, p. 248).

Nevertheless, what characterised the Great Masters was their ability to vary their taste from one painting to another, such as for example Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640): “it seems that after having done one with taste, he transformed his genius and developed another mind, to do another in another taste” (*il semble qu’après en avoir fait un dans un goust, il ait changé de génie & pris un autre esprit, pour en faire un autre dans un autre goust*), and this because “he entered fully into the subjects he was working on, he transformed himself into the characters and became a new man from each new subject” (*qu’il entroit tout entier dans les sujets qu’il avoit à traiter, il se transformoit en autant de caracteres & se faisoit à un nouveau sujet un nouvel home*, De Piles, 1677, p. 222–223).

This inability to set taste universally, including in just one artist, explains the multiple failures of connoisseurs and the “inquisitive” who

developed an opinion of a Master on the basis of three or four Paintings that they have seen, and who then believe they have sufficient knowledge to be able to make decisions regarding his manner, without reflecting on the more or less considerable care that the Painter will have taken to produce them, nor the age at which they were produced.

*(se font une idée d'un Maître sur trois ou quatre Tableaux qu'ils en auront vûs, & qui croient après cela avoir un titre suffisant pour décider sur sa manière, sans faire réflexion aux soins plus ou moins grands que le Peintre aura pris à les faire, ni à l'âge auquel il les aura faits.)*

(De Piles, 1715, p. 94–95)

These failures were questionable as there “is no Painter who has not produced some good and some bad Paintings” (*n’y a point de Peintre qui n’ait fait quelques bons & quelques mauvais Tableaux*, Piles, 1715, p. 94–95). To improve their methods and make them more reliable, connoisseurs first had to learn to detach themselves from prejudices, to not make a fetish of the “taste”, “manner” or “style” of the artists they were studying, and observe with the greatest circumspection the infinitesimal variations that distinguished the different works by a single artist, as suggested by Jonathan Richardson, when indicating for example how, in his *Tancrède et Herminie* (Birmingham, Barber Institute of Fine Arts), the “Taste” of Nicolas Poussin mixed the “usual Manner” of the artist with that of Jules Romain (1499–1546) (1719, p. 78–79).

Nicolas Poussin himself recognised this, conceding clearly that he was not a great colourist, but justifying it by explaining that it “was absolutely not necessary to seek” (*ne faut point chercher*) in his works “the talents of painting” (*les talents de la peinture*) “which he had not been given” (*qu’il n’a pas recues*), given that they “are not given to just one man” (*ne sont pas donnez à un seul homme*, Félibien, 1685, 8<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 304–305). In other words, universal taste and artists do not exist, as the latter always have the failings of their qualities. André Félibien thus observed that the paintings of Correggio did not have “this harmony of colour, this beautiful shining light and this freshness of tints so admirable that we can see in the Paintings by Titian, in which it seems that we can see the blood in the carnations, so naturally are they presented” (*cette harmonie de couleurs, cette belle conduite de lumieres, & cette fraischeur de teintes si admirable qu’on remarque dans les Tableaux du Titien, où il semble qu’on voye du sang dans ses carnations, tant il les represente naturelles*). On the other hand, “in counterpoint, Correggio had a stronger imagination, and drew with greater and

more exquisite taste; and although he was not perfectly correct in his drawing, there was nevertheless force and nobility in all that he did” (*en recompense le Corege a eu l’imagination plus forte, & a desseigné d’un goust beaucoup plus grand & plus exquis; Et quoy qu’il ne fust pas tout-à-fait correcte dans son desseïn, il y a neanmoins de la force & de la noblesse dans tout ce qu’il a fait*, 1666, 2<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 233–234).

To try and consider taste in a coherent manner, it is furthermore necessary to abandon a second idea: the possibility of defining “good” and “bad taste” by ignoring the community of critics and spectators. These concepts, explained Abraham Bosse, were social constructs. When he spoke of “the Great, Grand and Rich Manner or good Taste” (*du Grand, de la Grande, & Riche Maniere ou bon Goust*) he “did not say or mean anything other than a well executed Painting that followed the Taste or opinion of the most learned Painters” (*ne veut dire ou signifier autre chose, qu’un Tableau bien fait & suivant le Goust ou opinion des plus sçavants Peintres*, 1649, *Définitions*, n.p.). Moreover, he further explained that what makes an idealised drawing better than a drawing based simply on meticulous observation of nature was “what amongst ourselves we call good or great Taste” (*ce qu’entre nous on nomme le bon ou grand Goust*, Bosse, 1667, p. 27; my underlining). If, for example, it was possible to admire the manner in which “Caravaggio imitated Nature in its air and with his line, such that he had taste” (*le Caravage imitoit la Nature en son air & en son trait, telle qu’il en avoit le goust*), it was necessary to recognise, with most critics, that this manner was less “artist” than that of Tintoretto (1519–1594), Veronese (1570–1596) or Bassano (c. 1510–1592), which was based on knowledge and more in-depth exposure to the ancient models and the great masters (Bosse, 1649, p. 50; Richardson, 1719, p. 60–61).

Thus, that which makes it possible to distinguish good from bad taste, and good taste from the best taste, was the approval “of the learned men in this art” (*des savants en cet art*, Bosse, 1649, p. 26–27). It was thanks to them, and the constancy of their judgement, that ancient works of art were considered to be the primary sources of “good taste”. It was not because the ancients were necessarily better than their modern equivalents that it was necessary to defend imitation of the former, at least in the early days of an artist’s training—barring cultivation of “a type of Religion” (*une espece de Religion*) with regard to “the least production by the ancients” (*la moindre production des anciens*, Perrault, 1688, *Préface*, n.p.). It was because the works produced by the ancients were capable of standing the test of time and remained

greatly esteemed by both spectators and artists, unlike the “modern taste”, which was necessarily subject to the whimsy of fashion (Bosse, 1667, p. 19; Piles, 1668, p. 7).

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Audran, 1683; Batteux, 1746; Bosse, 1649, 1667; De Piles, 1668, 1677, 1684, 1708, 1715; Dezallier d’Argenville, 1745–1752; Du Bos, 1719 [1740]; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; Perrault, 1688–1697; Richardson, 1719.

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Technique ⇒ Handling, Painting, Practice



## THEORY

fr.: *théorie*  
 germ.: *Theoria*  
 nl.: *theorie*  
 it.: *theoria*

**Science, rudiment, knowledge, thought, rule, maxim, precept, principle, method, practice**

*Although most authors from the modern period are in agreement with opposing theory and practice, to do so, they take as their basis a specifically artistic conception of practice which, far from being the contrary of theory, is instead more the complement, not to say the condition.*

It is not easy to define with precision that which, in the work of an artist, comes from his knowledge and thoughts (his “theory”) and that which comes from the material aspects and its execution (his “practice”). Even when an author suggests “distributing” the “parts of this Art” (*parties de cet Art*), like Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, his propositions were often judged to be “extremely vague” (*extrêmement vagues*, Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 3). Why?

The first difficulty lay in the distinction between theory and practice. In principle, the word theory designates knowledge of the principles of art, as opposed to putting them into practice (Félibien, 1666, t. I, *Préface*, n. p.). An accomplished painter would thus be one who succeeded in mastering both the theory and practice of his art. Practice without theory would effectively only produce defective works, devoid of rules and measures, whilst theory without practice would simply be unproductive. This could easily describe the activity of the art lover, who judges works without being able to produce his own, which may give his activity a form of nobility (Félibien, 1666, *1<sup>er</sup> Entretien*, p. 45–46; Richardson, 1725, p. 26), particularly because it is linked to other liberal arts, such as mathematics or geometry (Bosse, 1667, p. 43). But theory of this type that is detached from practice does not in any way suit artists, who can only be judged in the light of their works:

In the same way that the only Practice removed from the lights of Art is always ready to fall off the precipice like a blind man, without

being able to produce anything that contributes to a solid reputation; thus Theory without the assistance of the hand can never attain the perfection that it has proposed.

*(De mesme que la seule Pratique destituée des lumieres de l'Art, est toûjours preste de tomber dans le precipice comme une aveugle, sans pouvoir rien produire qui contribuë à une solide reputation; ainsi la Theorie sans l'aide de la main, ne peut jamais atteindre à la perfection qu'elle s'est propose).*

(De Piles, 1668, p. 8)

This type of distinction was nevertheless more delicate than can be imagined. For example, some of these authors were not always in agreement with themselves. In 1666, André Félibien thus described the three parts of art: composition, drawing and colouring, and explained that the first was wholly the work of theory, as “the operation takes place in the imagination of the Painter, who must have disposed the whole of his work in his mind and possess it perfectly before coming to its execution” (*l'operation s'en fait dans l'imagination du Peintre, qui doit avoir disposé tout son Ouvrage dans son esprit & le posseder parfaitement avant que d'en venir à l'execution*), whilst the other two, “concern only Practice, and are the domain of the Worker” (*ne regardent que la Pratique, & appartiennent à l'Ouvrier*, Félibien, 1666, *1<sup>er</sup> Entretien*, p. 45–46). Yet in 1676, the same Félibien formulated a rather different opinion: “the Composition, Drawing and Colouring” “all three depend on reasoning, and the execution, what we refer to as Theory and Practice; reasoning is the Father of Painting, and execution is its Mother” (*la Composition, le Dessein, & le Coloris, [ . . . ] toutes trois dépendent du raisonnement, & de l'execution, ce qu'on nomme la Theorie, & la Pratique; le raisonnement est comme le Pere de la Peinture, & l'execution comme la Mere*, Félibien, 1676, p. 392–393).

How can we understand such a complete reversal? Three main reasons can be cited. The first, and most obvious, is the difficulty, for an artist, to implement a theory. As Félibien explained, the merit of a painter is not to conceive a theory, even a learned or complex one, but to be able to put it into practice in his works: “it is by working that I fully appreciated that there are a thousand difficulties in the execution of a Work, and that all the precepts in the world do not make it possible to overcome them” (*c'est en travaillant que je me suis bien apperceu qu'il se rencontre mille difficultez dans l'execution d'un Ouvrage que tous les préceptes ne sçauroient apprendre à surmonter*, 1666, t. I, *Préface*, n.p.).

Félibien nevertheless admired the art of Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665), even though he “said nothing of the matters that concern practice, and is attached only to theory, or rather to that which depends solely on the genius and force of the mind” (*ne dit rien des choses qui regardent la pratique, & qu’il ne s’attache qu’à la theorie, ou plutôt à ce qui dépend seulement du génie & de la force de l’esprit*, 1685, 8<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 311–312). He thus recognised that the ideas of artists do indeed depend, at least in part, on their ability to prepare their works mentally, and that there was a form of greatness in the ability to develop, within a work, a genuine theoretical proposition, including when this development occurred to the detriment of the execution. But Félibien also observed that the ideas of artists were not comparable with those of philosophers or mathematicians. The ideas of artists were specifically pictorial, corresponding to a specifically pictorial theory and which explained, for example, that it was possible to pardon the faults of costume in the paintings by Titian because of the effect of the whole and their qualities, of which Félibien ultimately admitted that they were the pinnacle of art, as “execution is above theory” (*l’exécution est au dessus de la theorie*, 1679, 5<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 95–96).

The question was thus to understand how far it was possible to present the art of painting as an art of thinking. In 1666, Félibien’s position was minimalistic. He defended the idea that the theoretical part of painting was the composition. Ten years later, his words were more radical. All parts of art, including execution, depended on both theory and practice. There was thus an element of practice in the composition—the composition of a painting did not correspond solely to a mental representation, but also to its realisation, in the form of a drawing or painted sketch—and an element of theory in the execution which, through repeated gestures, made it possible to incorporate, as well as understand, the rules of art—what Claude Boutet called an “acquired science” (*science acquise*, 1696, p. 131–132) and Gerard de Lairesse a “second nature” (*twede natuur*) (Lairesse, 1712, t. II, p. 42).

Practice certainly cultivates the different qualities of theory, which can be seen as tedious, or even degrading, for those who consider painting as a liberal art: it requires “assiduity”, and “exercise”, that is, repeated gestures and sometimes a significant amount of work time (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 91), sometimes even a whole lifetime. But it is essential for a painter that he be able to not only understand the theoretical principles of his art, but also know how to apply them. The distinction proposed by Hilaire Pader between the precepts of “theory”

and the practical “rules” no longer hold, unless you consider that it is enough to want to excel in an art to genuinely excel in it:

The Painter is divided between Theory and Practice. Theory gives the general precepts, which must be observed by those who want to excel in this Art. Practice provides the rules of judgement and prudence, teaching how to implement what has generally been said and imagined. (*La Peinture se divise en Theorie & Pratique. La Theorie donne les preceptes generaux, qui doivent estre observés par ceux qui desirent exceller en cét Art. La pratique donne les regles de jugement & prudence, enseignant comme il faut mettre en œuvre ce qui generalement a esté dit & imagine.*)

(1649, p. 9)

This distinction between precepts and rules nevertheless refers back to one last question: that of how theory and practice are acquired. Pader effectively highlights that there is a set of knowledge that it is possible to acquire before even touching the slightest paintbrush (the “precepts”), that can be distinguished from the choices and strategies specific to the execution itself (the “rules”). This statement is nevertheless purely speculative, to the extent that it does not correspond in any way to the traditional way in which artists study.

One of most commonly cited examples of the difficulties in associating artistic theory and practice is the imitation of nature. This question is at the heart of the debates that animated the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture, from the date of its creation in 1648, as remembered by Henry Testelin at the very end of the 17th century:

the study of the beautiful Ancient figures was highly necessary at the beginning, and even more advantageous than the natural, but one was assured that in both one and the other one was obliged to force oneself to exactly imitate one’s subject in order to collect the desired fruit, and accustom the eye and the hand to exactitude and precision, which are the basis for the Practice of Painting [ . . . ]. Regarding the most advanced, they were implored to combine Theory with Practice, to examine the reasons that the Authors of the most beautiful Ancient works had observed, and which are served by Geometry for the proportions, Anatomy, to understand Ostology, the situation, the form and movement of the external muscles only, Perspective, Physics and Physionomy to know the various characters of complexions and passions, for it is necessary to know all these things to render well one’s load of pleasure, in which consists what we call great taste.

*(l’étude des belles figures Antiques étoit très nécessaire dans le commencement, & même plus avantageuse que le naturel, mais l’on assura qu’en l’un & en l’autre on étoit obligé de s’assujettir à imiter exactement son*

*objet pour en recueillir le fruit qu'on en desire, & s'habituer l'œil & la main à la justesse & precision, ce qui est le fondement de la Pratique de la Peinture [ . . . ]. A l'égard des plus avancés on les exorta de joindre la Theorie à la Pratique, d'examiner les raisons qu'ont observé les Auteurs des beaux ouvrages Antiques qui se sont servis de la Geometrie pour les proportions, l'Anatomie, pour apprendre l'Ostologie, la situation, la forme & le mouvement des muscles extérieurs seulement, la Perspective, la Physique & la Phisionomie pour connoître les divers caracteres des complexions & des passions, car il faut bien sçavoir toutes ses choses pour donner bien à propos ses charges dagremens, en quoi consiste ce que l'on appelle le grand gout).* (Testelin, (s.d. [1693–1694], p. 11)

Studying the ancient was essential, notably for young artists, particularly because it made it possible to form one's taste in the light of the best models. But to do so, it was necessary to “combine theory with practice” (*joindre la théorie à la pratique*). In order to understand and integrate the rules on which these works were based, it was necessary to not only study them as precisely as possible, but also to reconstitute all the reasons for which they were privileged.

Even an amateur should thus have some knowledge of practice. Only practice effectively makes it possible to understand the reasons for the choices made by artists who, unlike amateurs who deduce their theory from a necessarily limited number of works observed, devote their whole life to constantly questioning and permanently feeding their theory:

There can be found in practice difficulties that theory cannot predict, and in which rules serve almost no purpose, because those who view cannot always be placed in the same place, and see the paintings only through a sight vane, mainly in the major works that can only be seen from a single place.

*(Il se trouve dans la pratique des difficultez que la theorie ne peut prévoir, & où les regles ne servent de guere, à cause que ceux qui regardent ne peuvent pas toujours estre placez dans un mesme lieu, & ne voir les tableaux qu'au travers d'une pinulle, principalement dans les grands ouvrages qu'on ne peut voir d'un seul endroit.)* (Félibien, 1679, 5<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 86–87)

This is the reason why Félibien did not hesitate to affirm that it was “difficult to give one's judgement if one does not have a great deal of practice and theory combined” (*difficile de donner son jugement si l'on n'a une grande pratique & la theorie jointes ensemble*, 1685, 8<sup>e</sup> Entretien, p. 295). If, as the French historiography reminds us, the word “theory” derives from the Greek  $\theta\epsilon\alpha$ , which means “contemplation, considera-

tion” (Félibien, 1676, p. 752), this clearly indicates that the regard is knowledge which becomes sharper and sharper the more it is used.

Jan BLANC

[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Bosse, 1667; Boutet, 1672; De Lairese, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1668; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; Pader, 1649; Richardson, 1725; Testelin, s.d. [1693 or 1694].

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|   |
|---|
| Thought ⇒ Mind/spirit                       |
| Tinct ⇒ Colour/Colouring                    |
| Tint ⇒ Harmony (of colours)                 |
| Tone ⇒ Colour/Colouring, Houding, Réveillon |
| Tool ⇒ Studio                               |
| Touch ⇒ Handling, Réveillon, Style          |

## TRUE/TRUTH

fr.: *vrai*  
 germ.: *Wahr*  
 nl.: *waar, echt*  
 it.: *vero*  
 lat.: *verus*

***Vraisemblable, imitation***

*The adjective true, and its noun, truth, are at the heart of French reflections on the status of imitation. The term was used little in the Poetics, because of Aristotle's hierarchy between the truth (the realm of history) and the plausible (the realm of poetry). "In addition, if we object that a thing is not true, it is possible that it is as it should be—that is what Sophocles said he made men as they should be, and Euripides as they are" (En outre, si on objecte qu'une chose n'est pas vraie, il se peut que par ailleurs elle soit comme elle doit être — c'est ainsi que Sophocle disait qu'il faisait quant à lui les hommes tels qu'ils doivent être, et Euripide tels qu'ils sont) (Poetics, 60 b 32–34). In the Cinquecento treatises on painting, the term truth (vero) always designated the object of imitation, and not a quality of the painting: for Dolce, a good painter should imitate truth ("imitare il vero"), and Titian (1488–1576) was able to give his figures colouring that was very much lifelike (1557, p. 146), rivalling nature. Similarly, Dürer (1471–1528) represented the truth and aliveness of nature (p. 166).*

French theory naturally conserves this type of formulation (*the imitation of truth*), but for the first time added an artistic meaning to the notion of truth. Félibien praised Poussin (1594–1665) for having given life to the figures in his *Eliézer et Rébecca* (1648, musée du Louvre, Paris): "all their actions are so true [ . . . ] that it looks like there is movement and life (*toutes leurs actions sont si vraies [ . . . ] qu'il y paraît du mouvement et de la vie*" (1685, 8<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 353), and Le Brun stated that the aim of painting was "the true and natural representation of things" (*la vraie et naturelle représentation des choses*), opposing Raphael's truth to the deceptive pageantry (*fard*) of Titian (3 Sept. 1667, in J. Lichtenstein and C. Michel, *Conférences*, t. I, vol. 1, p. 142). Nevertheless, the colourists were the first to make truth the ultimate quality of painting, identifying it with colouring. In his *Conférence* on

the Veronese's *Pèlerins d'Emmaüs* (c. 1559, musée du Louvre, Paris), Noret praised the complexions, "the colour of the skin, which appears so realistic" that the figures looked alive (*la couleur de la chair qui paraît si vraie, ibidem*, t. I, vol. 1, p. 154). In his Conférence, "On the merits of colour" (*Sur le mérite de la couleur*, 7 November 1671), Gabriel Blanchard deliberately inverted the hierarchy of true and plausible which had dominated in the *Poetics*: "Colour, in the perfection that we suppose of it, always represents the truth and drawing represents only plausible possibility" (*La couleur, dans la perfection que nous la supposons, représente toujours la vérité et le dessein ne représente que la possibilité vraisemblable*). Far from referring to a superior truth of a philosophical nature, plausibility was then assimilated to an unspoken possibility. At the end of the century, Titian was considered to be the master of colour because he was "extremely delicate in the skin tones, which were real and natural" (*fort délicat dans les teintes de chair, étant vraies et naturelles*) (Noël Coypel, 26 April 1697, in J. Lichtenstein and C. Michel, *Conférences*, t. II, vol. 2, p. 606). The Quarrel of colour and drawing played a part in imposing truth as a purpose of painting in its own right.

Roger de Piles succeeded in detaching the truth from its common meaning, giving it an entirely aesthetic meaning. "Truth in painting" (*vrai en peinture*) no longer had anything in common with "natural truth" (*vrai naturel*), as shown by J. Lichtenstein (*La Couleur éloquente*, chap. "Du vrai en peinture ou les divers usages de la cosmétique", p. 183–211). The criterion of truth moved over to the viewer, and the eyes became the only yardstick for artistic truth, freed from any extrinsic references, be they natural or metaphysical. Truth was no longer defined by the conformity of the representation to objective reality (as for Champaigne), nor even to an ideal or transcendent truth (as for Le Brun). Instead, it was the ability of the representation to touch and transport the viewer. The "truth in painting" (*vrai en peinture*) no longer designated a relationship with the truth, but a relationship with the viewer of the painting. This "truth in painting" was pure fiction and designated the efficacy of the pretence. In the preface to the *Cours de peinture* (1708), the "truth in painting" was not presented as an aim, but as a means of attracting the viewer and entering into conversation with him: "The Viewer is not obliged to go out in search of the Truth in a work of Painting: but the Truth in Painting must through its effects call out to the Viewer" (*Le Spectateur n'est pas obligé d'aller chercher du Vrai dans un ouvrage de Peinture: mais*



*le Vrai dans la Peinture doit par son effet appeler les Spectateurs* p. 8). The truth was thus serving illusion. Yet for Roger de Piles, the illusion of truth could only be achieved through mastery of colouring. Only this aspect of painting could attract “the eyes through the truth that it represents” (*les yeux par la vérité qu’elle représente, Conversations sur la connaissance de la peinture*, 1677, p. 81). To those who accused Rubens of having “too little truth” (*trop peu de vérité*), de Piles objected the need for “learned exaggeration” (*savante exaggeration*). Through a paradox in appearance only, this exaggeration made “painted objects seem more real than reality itself” (*paraître les objets peints plus vrais que les véritables mêmes*); only artifice leads to truth, and more precisely the artifice of colour. De Piles praised “this smoothness of colour that is so necessary for successfully expressing the truth” (*cette suavité de la couleur si nécessaire pour arriver à l’expression du vrai*, p. 338).

The values defended by the colourists were fully recognised, alongside those of drawing in the syncretism that dominated at the Académie at the turn of the century. This syncretism, resolutely tinged with idealism, advocated the quest for “beautiful nature” (*belle nature*) by uniting nature and Ideas, the true and the plausible. For Pierre Monier (1686), the great artists produced masterpieces by “uniting the true with the plausible” (*unissant le vrai au vraisemblable*, 28 September 1686, in J. Lichtenstein and C. Michel, *Conférences*, t. II, vol. 1, p. 157). For Noël Coypel too, painting “produces the perfection of natural beauty and unites the true with the plausible in the things subjected to the sense of sight” (*produit le parfait de la beauté naturelle et unit le vrai au vraisemblable des choses soumises au sens de la vue*, 26 April 1697, in J. Lichtenstein and C. Michel, *Conférences*, t. II, vol. 2, p. 593), succeeding in perfecting nature by choosing its most beautiful parts. De Piles formulated this summary masterfully in his Conference, “Du vrai dans la peinture” (7 March 1705), included in full in the *Cours de peinture* (1708). He identified three truths: simple, ideal and composed. The simple truth is assimilated to the *trompe-l’œil*, which is accepted but does not attain perfection in art, if an “ideal truth” (*vrai idéal*) is not added to it, drawn both from living models and antique sculpture. The combination of the two, the “composed truth” (*vrai composé*), is assimilated with what is plausible and is the summit of art: “It is this beautiful plausibility the *often seems truer* than the truth itself” (*C’est ce beau vraisemblable qui paraît souvent plus vrai que la vérité même*). Once again, the truth of the subjective effect supplants the truth of objective reality. Abbé Batteux, who disseminate academic thought,

defined beautiful nature in these terms: “It is not the truth that is; but the truth that can be, the beautiful truth, which is represented as if it existed really, and with all the perfections that it can receive” (*Ce n’est pas le vrai qui est; mais le vrai qui peut être, le beau vrai, qui est représenté comme s’il existait réellement, et avec toutes les perfections qu’il peut recevoir*, 1746, III, 1).

In other countries, the truth was not the subject of particular conceptualisation, or even of any special use. English theorists used the adjective (never in its noun form) to underline the faithfulness of the representation to the model: the painter had to respect “the true proportions of all things natural and artificial” (Browne, 1675, p. 29), “the true proportion, air and character” of the people he painted (Shaftesbury, 1713, p. 5), or “the true air of the heads” (Richardson, p. 114). The English spirit was no doubt too pragmatic to call into question the the very essence of reality.

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

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Aristote, 1980: Batteux, 1746; Browne, 1669 [1675]; Conférences, [2006-2015]; De Piles, 1677, 1708; Dolce, 1557; Félibien, 1666–1688; Richardson, 1715 [1725]; Shaftesbury, 1713.

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# U

Ugliness  $\implies$  Beauty, Caricature  
Understanding  $\implies$  Judgement, Painter

## UNION

fr.: *union*  
germ.: *Vereinigung, Zusammenkunst*  
nl.: *binding, harmonie, houding, reddering, samensmelting, smelting*  
it.: *compagnia*  
lat.: *vaguezza*

**Union of colours, harmony, agreement, commixture, concord, consent, economy, contrivance, friendship, sympathy, whole together**

*Succeeding in preserving the charming diversity of the different colours that make up a painting, whilst also preserving the overall effect: that is the challenge, however contradictory it may appear, that painters must take up when they pay attention to the union of colours.*

The question of union, or the union of colours, in principle seems to be extremely simple:

It is said that a painting is painted with a good union of colours when they all go well together, and the light illuminates them; that there are none that are so strong that they destroy the others, and all the parts are treated so well that each thing produces its own effect well.

*(On dit qu'un tableau est peint avec une belle union de couleurs, quand elles s'accordent bien toutes ensemble, & à la lumière qui les éclaire; qu'il n'y en a point de trop fortes qui détruisent les autres, & que toutes les parties sont si bien traitées, que chaque chose fait bien son effet.)*

(Félibien, 1676, p. 772)

The concept of union was thus directly associated with that of harmony (Van Mander, 1604, *Grondt*, V, 25–26, fol. 17r) and agreement (Junius, 1641, p. 203–204, 244). The union of colours corresponded to an analogical report that some colours had with others, and made it possible to create the feeling of general unity, despite the diversity of particular tints (Junius, 1641, p. 245; Sandrart, 1675, p. 63). In this, it can be compared to the union that rules the relationship of proportions in the different parts of the human body (Junius, 1641, p. 247–248; Van Hoogstraten, 1678, p. 300).

The secret of union was thus said to be found in a question of dosage. It was a question of encouraging the legibility of a composition, as well as the visual pleasure that this composition exerted on the spectator, whose eyes were attracted by equal parts of force and interest (Bosse, 1649, *Définitions de quelques mots de cet art, cités en divers lieux dans ce Traité*, n.p.; Piles, 1668, p. 131–133). It was necessary to associate the colours linked to each other by relations of sympathy, particularly if the colours were similar: this is how a work would seem to be composed of harmonious colouring (Félibien, 1676, p. 393–395), “a discreet and judicious blend” (*un mélange discret et judicieux*) that allows it to be pleasing on the eye (Leblond de Latour, 1669, p. 73–74).

Successfully achieving such union was, however, difficult. Certain authors cite the use of expedients, such as using glazes, which make it possible to unify the colours of a work. Furthermore, there were many who noted that, since the invention of oil painting, works of art had “much more union, more force and more gentleness” (*beaucoup plus d'union, plus de force & plus de douceur*, Félibien, 1666, *2<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 163–164; see also Félibien, 1685, *7<sup>e</sup> Entretien*, p. 152–153; Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 180). Other theorists observed that the touch was also important for the effect of union of a composition. The harmony of colours of a work effectively does not depend solely on the comparative quantity and distribution of the different tints, but also on the manner

in which these tints were placed materially on the surface of the work (Angel, 1642, p. 55–56). When the touch was extremely vibrant and visible, it brought a work to life; but it also tended to divide attention and break up the general harmony. When, on the other hand, the touch was meticulous, it made it possible to bring uniformity to the colours of a composition (Félibien, 1685, 7<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 152–153), but with the risk of softening the colors too much and of decreasing the precision by an excess of softness, particularly from a certain distance (Dupuy du Grez, 1699, p. 198–199). It was thus recommended to find a happy medium between these two manners of applying strokes to a painting, or to adapt one's manner of painting to the objects represented (Beurs, 1692, p. 32; Smith, 1692, p. 82–83).

For most authors, however, a successful union of colours lay in the ability to find a balance between the variety of local tints and their general unity. The different colours in a given composition had to be harmonious by means of agreements with their surroundings, making it possible to avoid contrasts that were too abrupt, as they would highlight one tint too much in relation to another (Vinci, 1651, p. 31). Shadows were definitely necessary for a well-structured composition and they allowed the eyes to “rest” (De Piles, 1668, p. 136). But they should be neither too numerous, nor too strong. When this was the case, when for example they marked too violently the shadows produced by too great a number of draperies (Goeree, 1682, p. 332; Aglionby, 1685, p. 109–110), they divided the composition by separating the objects from each other with large black areas. The same failing could be observed with colours that were too bright, particularly in terms of the reflections or highlights (De Piles, 1668, p. 127–131; see also Smith, 1692, p. 82; Boutet, 1696, p. 61–63), such as compositions with too many details (Piles, 1684, p. 76; De Lairese, 1712, t. I, p. 44–45).

Black shadows could be useful, or even necessary, as a means of creating effects of relief, or of representing the effects of artificial light (Goeree, 1670, p. 2); but they always needed to be accompanied by progressive models and gradations (Goeree, 1670, p. 108–109; Aglionby, 1685, p. 18–20). Generally speaking, most theorists recommended that “most of the Bodies, which are in Light that is extended and distributed equally by everything, take their Colour from one another” (*la pluspart des Corps, qui sont sous une Lumiere étenduë & distribuë également par tout, tiennent de la Couleur l'un de l'autre*, Piles, 1668, p. 35; see also La Fontaine, 1679, p. 37–39). As suggested by Samuel van Hoogstraten, it was necessary for the different colours in a given composition to be

connected to each other like the different threads of a piece of fabric (1678, p. 300).

It was not simply a question of limiting the number of colours used in a work, but of distributing the use of some of these colours on different objects or different areas of the composition, as a means of increasing the feeling of unity in the work (Goeree, 1670, p. 9). This was a technique that was particularly essential for large compositions, where the number of figures seriously complicated the work of the painter (Aglionby, 1685, p. 118–119), and in which colourists excelled, as can be seen in the success of the large ceiling by Pietro da Cortona (1596–1669) in the Palazzo Barberini (Félibien, 1688, 9<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 6–7). Thus, in their paintings, portraitists had the good habit of adjusting the “background tone” (*ton des fonds*) of their paintings to the “tone of the heads” (*ton des cheveux*) of their models (De Piles, 1708, p. 275–276).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Aglionby, 1685; Angel, 1642; Beurs, 1692; Bosse, 1649; Boutet, 1672; Da Vinci, 1651; De Lairese, 1707 [1712]; De Piles, 1668, 1684, 1708; Dupuy Du Grez, 1699; Félibien, 1666–1688, 1676; Goeree, 1670 a, 1682; Hoogstraten, 1678; Junius, 1637 [1638, 1641]; La Fontaine, 1679; Le Blond De La Tour, 1669; Sandrart, 1675 et 1679; Smith, 1692; Van Mander, 1604.

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# V

Variety  $\implies$  Composition, Ornament  
View  $\implies$  Eye, Landscape

## **VRAISEMBLABLE**

fr.: *vraisemblable*  
germ.: *wahrscheinlich*  
nl.: *waarschijnlijk*  
it.: *verisimile, verosimile*  
lat.: *verisimilis*

### **Truth, true, history, decorum**

*The concept of vraisemblable is central to the theory of representation that was formulated in Italy from 1550, particularly in commentaries on Aristotle's Poetics and the treaties on painting published following the Council of Trent. The aim of mimetic arts was to produce a plausible representation, an analogon of the "truth" that was as similar as possible. In opposition to Plato's distortion of simulacra, Aristotle bestowed on the vraisemblable a philosophical status that was superior to that of the real: from an ontological point of view, the vraisemblable embraced the general and referred to a universal truth that went beyond the contingencies of history (51a38); from a rhetorical point of view, the vraisemblable had the ability to persuade, even*



with what was false (60a26). And from an ethical point of view, the *vraisemblable* referred to the usual functioning of characters, which did not correspond to their real functioning: “It is likely that many things occur against the *vraisemblable*” (Il est vraisemblable que beaucoup de choses se produisent contre le *vraisemblable*) (56a24). For all these reasons, the *vraisemblable* was the area of predilection of the poet in the sense of “creator”, be he a playwright or a painter.

This concept became a pivotal element in the “classic French doctrine” (R. Bray) formulated in the aftermath of the Quarrel over Corneille’s *Le Cid* (1637). The *Académie française* criticised Corneille for the implausibility of the play, and discovered the normative potential of a notion that made it possible to censor *en bloc* the failure to respect the classical unities, the constancy of the characters, and public morality. In the discourse of Jean Chapelain, the *vraisemblable* was closely linked to illusion and the purgation of passions: spectators must adhere unconditionally to the representation in order to benefit from the catharsis, conceived in moral and civil terms. By making it possible to purge passions, the *vraisemblable* works on behalf of the moral and social utility of the theatre.

Naturally, when the theory of art started to develop in France in the early 1660s, the concept of *vraisemblance* was an integral part of a legitimisation strategy: if the *Académie française* had succeeded in saving the theatre from its bad reputation, the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture* intended in turn to consider painting as a liberal art, and painters as poets rather than craftsmen. The *vraisemblable* was one of these imported notions that brought nobility to the production of painters, without any particular pertinence for painting. The term effectively designates both what in appearance is true and what is the opposite of true, as Furetière notes successively:

Vraisemblable. Adj. What appears to be true, what is in the realm of possibility of things that have happened, or that will happen. The adventures in novels and plays should be more *vraisemblable* than true. (*Vraisemblable. adj. m. et f. et subst. Qui a apparence de vérité, qui est dans la possibilité des choses arrivées, ou à arriver. Les aventures des romans et des pièces dramatiques doivent être plutôt vraisemblables, que vraies*).

In the first meaning, the word thus designates what appears to be true. For Fréart de Chambray (1662), it is linked to the accuracy of sacred

or secular history, and a form of intellectual honesty in the painter. Fréart subsequently blamed Gilio and Paleotti for the implausibility that prevented viewers from adhering to the history being represented. This meaning was very present in the first Conferences, pronounced at the Académie between 1667 and 1670. However, the plasticity of the term appeared in the debates opposing Philippe and Jean-Baptiste de Champaigne on the one hand, and Le Brun and Félibien on the other, notably on the subject of Poussin: the Champaigne brothers made Poussin the paragon of purely historic plausibility, referring to archeological conformity (such as the fact of painting the disciples lying down in *The Last Supper*) and ultimately the Truth revealed. On the contrary, Le Brun and Félibien claimed poetic plausibility, which allowed the painter to move away from historical truth for aesthetic reasons, for example by painting five witnesses at the foot of the Cross instead of the crowd of assistants actually present that day.

According to the second meaning, the *vraisemblable* refers to a simulacrum, opposed or in any case independent of any historical or ontological truth. For Chapelain or Roger De Piles, painting and theatre had to seduce the spectator and arouse his faith by producing effective simulacra. As soon as the *vraisemblable* conditioned the spectator's adhesion to the fiction, it became the natural ally of the marvellous and the extraordinary, as a means of reinforcing its effects. The alliance between the marvellous and the plausible (Le Tasse), after having inspired Corneille to create the "extraordinary plausibility" (*vraisemblable extraordinaire*), was transposed into painting by De Piles in his *Conversations* (1677). In the *Idée du peintre parfait*, the marriage between the plausible and the extraordinary defined great taste: to mark the spectator, extraordinary things were required, but the spectator also had to be able to believe, so the things needed to be plausible.

From the 1670s, the concept of *vraisemblable* played a part in crystallising the idea of "beautiful nature" (*belle nature*)—a term used for the first time in the theory of art by Du Fresnoy (1668). Beautiful nature was understood to be a synthesis of nature and Idea, particularly by Charles Perrault in the third volume of the *Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes* (1692), and joined the De Piles' category of "composed truth" ("Du vrai dans la peinture", 7 March 1705, included in the *Cours de peinture*). The composed truth was "this beautiful plausibility that often seemed more real than truth itself" (*ce beau vraisemblable qui paraît souvent plus vrai que la vérité même*).

The notion of *vraisemblable* was adopted by English and German authors along with the rest of academic theory of Italian and French origin. However, the English did not associate it with a specific word: Shaftesbury translated the idea of *vraisemblable* by “seeming truth” (1713, p. 5) or “poetic truth” (*ibid.* p. 10, 45). Richardson, in his *Essay on the Theory of Painting*, returned to the idea of beautiful nature in the chapter called “Grace and Greatness”. He explained the need to perfect nature with the help of Ideas, preferring a “probable and rational” reality to any objective reality (1715 ed. 1725, p. 172), mentioning “natural probability” elsewhere (p. 233). In Germany, the French conception of *vraisemblable* was translated faithfully by Christian Ludwig von Hagedorn, the director of the academies in Dresden and Leipzig. In the *Betrachtungen über die Malerei* (1762, p. 152), he noted that art directed at the eyes needed to be based on plausibility, here taking up exactly the demonstration made by Chapelain in 1630 (*Nur gründet sich eine Kunst, welche das Auge überreden soll, auf Wahrscheinlichkeit*). Respecting the three unities was a guarantee of this plausibility (“Die Einheiten”, p. 172).

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[Translated by Kristy Snaith]

### Sources

Aristote, 1980; Conférences, [2006-2015]; Chapelain, 1630; De Piles, 1677, 1699, 1708; Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668; Fréart De Chambray, 1662; Furetière, 1690; Gilio da Fabriano, 1564; Hagedorn, 1762; Paleotti, 1582; Perrault, 1688–1697; Richardson, 1719; Shaftesbury, 1713.

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# V

Well-coloured ⇒ Handling  
Well-designed ⇒ Handling  
Well-disposed ⇒ Handling  
Well-painted ⇒ Handling

## WHOLE-TOGETHER

fr.: *tout-ensemble*  
germ.: [*zusammenbringen, zusammenfügen/binden*]  
nl.: [*aen een-bindingh, samen-schikking*]  
it.: *faccia un corpo*

**Economy, ordinance, colouring, *chiaroscuro*, repose, reddering, houding, effect, composition**

*The whole-together refers to the representation of a figure, and above all to the disposition or order of a painting. The term Bien ensemble (well together) had already appeared in Bosse, who defined it thus: “it is when in a Painting all is as well disposed as it must be” (c’est lors que dans un Tableau tout est si bien en la place qu’il doit estre, 1649, Définitions . . . , n.p.). He thus defined the composition and the subject, before De Piles used it in a different way to qualify a pictorial composition. Although this notion was only used in this expression (oeconomie du Tout-ensemble) in France*

by Roger De Piles, and by Richardson in England (*whole-together* or *Tout-ensemble*, 1719, 1725), in Germany and the Netherlands, Sandrart and Hoogstraten came extremely close through the notion of convenience (*Wohlstand* or *welstand* applied to colours), and those of houding and reddering, although without formulating a conception quite as complete.

### The *Whole-Together* and Order of the Painting

The *whole-together* was sometimes used in relation to the human figure (Audran, 1683, Préface, n.p.; Félibien, 1672, 4<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 326). It nevertheless more generally expressed the overall order of the painting. Junius described the disposition of the subject as the *oeconomia totius opera* (the economy of the whole-together, chap. 5). Regarding *The Israelites Gathering the Manna* (1637–1639, musée du Louvre, Paris) by Poussin (1594–1665), Testelin defined

the disposition of the figures, various groups separated from each other, makes up such distinct parts that one's regard can sweep across it without difficult, and yet so well bound to one another that they are united to make a beautiful whole-together.

*(la disposition des figures, divers groupes détachés les uns des autres composoient de grandes parties si distinctes, que la vûe s'y peut promener sans peine, & pourtant si bien liés l'un à l'autre qu'ils s'unissent pour faire un beau tout ensemble.*

(Conférences de l'année 1674, s.d. [1693–1694], p. 29)

The *whole-together* was thus linked to the general ordinance of the painting, created by the place, disposition of the figures, and perspective. The concept of whole-together was not absent from the preoccupations of the Parisian academics, and it was also associated with the treatment of shade which had to serve as the background for the highlighted objects, and that needed to be disposed prudently (Testelin, s.d. [1693–1694], p. 29 bis, p. 33]. In the same way, the term appeared in the writings of Félibien, who associated it with

painting pleasantly in order to please [. . .] something so gracious and so gentle on the eyes, that there is no one who does not feel a great deal of pleasure when looking at it.

*(peindre agréablement pour plaire [. . .] quelque chose de si gracieux & de si doux à la veüe, qu'il n'y a personne qui ne sente beaucoup de plaisir en le regardant.)*

(Félibien, 1688, 9<sup>e</sup> *Entretien*, p. 6–7)

Based on the analysis of the Barberini ceiling (1633–1639, Palazzo Barberini, Rome) by Pietro da Cortona (1596–1669), Félibien revealed his conception of the whole-together in which the nobility of the disposition of the figures competed with the agreement of the attitudes and expressions, and the union of colours. It was certainly a question of colours and their *vaguesse*, but what had to please above all, was the unity of the composition, which had to play a part in the effect of the whole of the subject.

Whilst granting a fundamental role to the disposition of the figures, Dufresnoy brought about a new orientation to the concept of the whole-together, which De Piles wrote as *Tout-ensemble* in his translation of the poem written by the painter in Latin. He thus proposed an agreement of the parts with their whole. To avoid any confusion, “it will be necessary to conceive of the Whole-Together and the effect of the Work as the whole view, and not each thing in particular” (*il faudra concevoir le Tout-ensemble & l’effet de l’Ouvrage comme tout d’une veuë, & non pas chaque chose en particulier*). He defined this *Tout-ensemble* which brought strength and beauty to a work, and which pleased the eyes (Dufresnoy/De Piles, 1668, p. 12, 16, 19), and which De Piles, in his *Remarques*, compared to a music concert (1668, *Remarque 78*, p. 83–85).

#### The *œconomie du Tout-ensemble*

De Piles formulated what he referred to as the oeconomy of the Whole-together (*œconomie du Tout-ensemble*) based on the reflections of Dufresnoy in response to a conference on ordinance given by Testelin. Taking as an example the paintings of Rubens (1577–1640), he defined a new conception of Whole-together, insisting first on two fundamental aspects. The objects and groups that made up a painting thus had to be linked to each other in such a way as to form a whole, and not just a juxtaposition of objects. And this link was achieved in two ways: “the first through the manner of the background, and the second by the manner of the group” (*la première par manière de fond, & la seconde par manière de groupe*, De Piles, 1677, p. 228–229).

To create this effect, no single element should be predominant, and each had to be linked to another. It was of course necessary for each object or group to have its own particular harmony, but “it is still necessary that in a Painting they all agree with each other, and that they form a Whole that is harmonious” (*il faut encore que dans un Tableau elles*

*s'accordent toutes ensemble, & qu'elles ne fassent qu'un Tout harmonieux*, De Piles, 1708, p. 110–112). To create the effect of a harmonious whole for the masses, two elements were essential: the colouring and the *chiaroscuro*. Although De Piles devoted separate chapters to the three notions in the *Cours de peinture*, they were nevertheless interdependent. Through them, he was the first theorist to formulate a pictorial conception of the composition of a painting.

The second aspect concerned the effect of the *Whole-together*. This was not linked to either the subject or the way of treating it, but to the visual effect that was dissociated from the history. The treatment of the centre of the painting remained fundamental, but the centrality was no longer defined in relation to the main figure (or subject), but in relation to the structure of the eye. For that, De Piles recommended a composition that highlighted on the one hand space and depth, thus reinforcing the impression of unity through convex and concave arrangements and, on the other, the centre, thanks to the effects of *chiaroscuro* and colouring (1708, p. 377). The coloured harmonies thus created a coloured union, and the whole was treated as a single whole, with light and shade that were stronger in the middle of the painting to create relief (1677, p. 235–236). For his demonstration of this, De Piles used “Titian’s rule” about the bunch of grapes (De Piles, 1668, *Remarque* 282, p. 121–124) and the descriptions of the paintings of Rubens (*Dissertation*, 1681).

To achieve this effect, as Sandrart had already done (1675, p. 79), De Piles recommended using a coloured sketch and

putting not only all one’s fire into the Invention, the Disposition and the *Chiaroscuro*, but also fixing all the colours, as much for the objects in particular as for the union and harmony of the whole-together.

(*de mettre non seulement tout son feu pour l’Invention, pour la Disposition & pour le Clair-obscur; mais encore y arrester toutes les couleurs tant pour les objets en particulier, que pour l’union & l’harmonie du tout ensemble.*)

(De Piles, 1684, p. 76)

Seeing the painting in his mind was necessary for the painter to be able to judge its effect, something that was all the more important given that the key issue of *Whole-together* was essentially the visual effect of the painting:

Yet this subordination which makes objects compete until there is only one, is based on two things, on the satisfaction of the eyes, and on the effect that the vision produces.

*(Or cette subordination qui fait concourir les objets à n'en faire qu'un, est fondée sur deux choses, sur la satisfaction des yeux, & sur l'effet que produit la vision.)*  
 (De Piles, 1708, p. 104–106)

The unity of the forms, drawing, colours and light had a direct impact on the spectator's vision, which was thus no longer dissipated and focused on all the parts of the painting in a single glance. But the vision of the whole also required that this vision "take repose from one area to another" (*se repose d'espace en espace*, De Piles, 1708, p. 365–366; 1715, p. 6–7). De Piles thus developed the idea of rest introduced by Dufresnoy:

Strictly speaking, it is after great Lights that you need great Shade, what we call Repose; this is because effectively the eyes will be tired, if they are attracted by a continuity of shining objects. The Clears can be used as repose for Browns, just as Browns can be used as rest for Clear.

*(C'est à dire proprement, qu'après de grands Clairs il faut de grandes Ombres, qu'on appelle des Repos; parce que effectivement la veüe seroit fatiguée, si elle estoit attirée par une continuité d'objets petillans. Les Clairs peuvent servir de repos aux Bruns, comme les Bruns en servent aux Clairs.*

(De Piles, 1668, *Remarque 282*, p. 121–124; *Remarque 385*, p. 136)

A lack of repose was also considered to be a failing for La Font de Saint-Yenne, who wished in a painting by Van Loo for

a little more harmony in the whole, and more agreement in the different tones that flicker a little in the vision, and the eyes would like to find more rest and union there.

*(un peu plus d'harmonie dans l'ensemble, & plus d'accord dans les differens tons qui papillotent un peu à la vüe, & l'œil y desireroit plus de repos & d'union.)*  
 (1747, p. 47)

Attracting the spectator's eye first, capturing it with the first glance, and then guiding it across the painting . . . these were the key issues of *Whole-together* for De Piles, who also attributed it with the ability to give an impression of truth and give rise to enthusiasm (1708, p. 95). However, transporting the spirit in this way did not mean rejecting the rules and science of painting. It was thanks to the unity and harmony of the whole that it was possible for the spectator to attain this extraordinary *vraisemblable* that touched his heart.

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 [Translated by Kristy Snaith]



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Wit  $\Rightarrow$  Genius, Mind/Spirit  
Wonder  $\Rightarrow$  Sublime  
Workman  $\Rightarrow$  Artist, Painter

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# Index of Terms

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*Entries in boldface indicate the title of an article in the dictionary. Entries in roman typeface indicate terms discussed throughout the different entries of the dictionary.*

## **Academy**

Accident ⇒ *Chiaroscuro*

Action ⇒ Attitude, History

Addition ⇒ Ornament

## **Agreeableness**

## **Agreement**

## **Air/Coutenance**

Air of head ⇒ Coutenance

Antique ⇒ Beauty, Choice

Antipathy ⇒ Colour, Colouring, Harmony (of colours)

## **Antiquity**

## **Art**

## **Artifice**

Artisan ⇒ Artiste, Painter

## **Artist**

## **Attitude**

Astonishment ⇒ Sublime

Baroque ⇒ Caprice

## **Beauty**

Becomingness ⇒ Convenience

## **Beholder/Spectator/Public**

**Bizarreness** ⇒ **Caprice**

Body ⇒ Carnation, Proportion

Boldness ⇒ Liberty

Branch ⇒ Genre  
 Brightness ⇒ Réveillon  
 Brunch of grapes ⇒ Group  
 Brushstroke ⇒ Artifice, Handling, Practice  
 By-work ⇒ Landscape, Ornament  
 Cabinet ⇒ Gallery  
**Caprice/Bizarreness**  
**Caricature**  
**Carnation**  
 Cartoon ⇒ Copy, Drawing  
 Cast shadow ⇒ Light  
 Charm ⇒ Agreeableness, Grace  
**Chiaroscuro**  
**Choice**  
 Chromatic ⇒ Colour, Colouring  
 Clearness ⇒ Réveillon  
 Collection ⇒ Gallery  
**Colour/Colouring**  
**Composition**  
 Conception ⇒ Idea  
 Concord ⇒ Harmony (of colours)  
**Connoisseur/Lover of art**  
 Consent ⇒ Agreement, Harmony  
 Contour ⇒ Proportoin  
 Contrivance ⇒ Group  
**Convenience/Decorum**  
 Correction ⇒ Convenience  
**Copy/Original**  
 Costum ⇒ Convenience, Harmony  
**Coutenance/Air**  
 Craftsman ⇒ Painter  
 Critic ⇒ Criticism, Spectator/Public  
**Criticism**  
 Curios ⇒ Criticism  
 Custom ⇒ Convenience  
 Dauber ⇒ Painter  
 Decency ⇒ Decorum, Convenience  
 Deceit ⇒ Pleasure  
**Decorum/Convenience**  
 Defect ⇒ Liberty

Delicacy ⇒ Grace  
 Delight ⇒ Pleasure  
 Design ⇒ Sketch  
 Diminution ⇒ Harmony (of colours)  
 Discord ⇒ Harmony (of colours)  
 Disposition ⇒ Composition, Effect, Genius, Invention, Judgement  
 Distance ⇒ Studio, Landscape  
 Distribution ⇒ Composition

### **Drapery**

Draught ⇒ Drawing, Sketch

### **Drawing**

Easiness ⇒ Liberty

Economy ⇒ Agreement, Composition, Effect

### **Effect**

Elegance ⇒ Agreeableness, Grace

Embellishment ⇒ Ornament

### **Engraving/Print**

Enthusiasm ⇒ Effect, Sublime

Eurythmy ⇒ Convenience, Proportion

Exhibition ⇒ Gallery

### **Expression of passions/Expression**

### **Eye**

Face ⇒ Air/Countenance

Face painting ⇒ Portrait

Fancy ⇒ Caprice, Imagination

Fantasy ⇒ Imagination

Fault ⇒ Liberty, Proportion

Fiction ⇒ History

Field ⇒ Ground

Figure ⇒ Attitude, Caricature, Convenience, Drapery, Ground,  
 Landscape, Portrait, Proportion

### **Fine Arts**

Fire ⇒ Genius

First thought ⇒ Drawing, Idea

Flesh ⇒ Carnation

Fold ⇒ Drapery

Freedom ⇒ Liberty

Friendship ⇒ Agreement, Colour/Colouring

Furor ⇒ Genius

### **Gallery**

Gaze  $\Rightarrow$  Eye, Pleasure, Spectator

**Genius**

**Genre**

Gift  $\Rightarrow$  Genius, Painter

**Grace**

**Ground**

**Group**

Hand  $\Rightarrow$  Handling, Manner, Practice, Taste

**Handling**

Harmoge  $\Rightarrow$  Harmony (of colours)

**Harmony**

**Harmony (of colours)**

**History**

**Houding**

I know not what  $\Rightarrow$  Beauty, Grace, Sublime

**Idea**

Illusion  $\Rightarrow$  Artifice, Pleasure

**Imagination**

**Imitation**

Improvement  $\Rightarrow$  Ornament

Inclination  $\Rightarrow$  Painter

Indecorum  $\Rightarrow$  Convenience

Industry  $\Rightarrow$  Practice

Intent  $\Rightarrow$  Idea

**Invention**

**Judgement**

Kind  $\Rightarrow$  Genre

Knowledge  $\Rightarrow$  Judgement, Taste

**Landscape**

Lay-man  $\Rightarrow$  Drapery, Studio

Liberal art  $\Rightarrow$  Art, Fine arts, Artist, Painting

**Liberty**

Licence  $\Rightarrow$  Caprice, Liberty

Life  $\Rightarrow$  Natural/Naturalness

**Light**

Likelihood  $\Rightarrow$  Proportion

**Lover of art/Connoisseur**

Magnificence  $\Rightarrow$  Sublime

**Manner**

**Mannerist**

Marvel  $\Rightarrow$  Sublime

Mass  $\Rightarrow$  Ground, *Houding*, Réveillon

Master  $\Rightarrow$  School

**Masterpiece**

Mechanical art  $\Rightarrow$  Art, Artist, Fine arts

Memory  $\Rightarrow$  Idea, Imagination

Measure  $\Rightarrow$  Proportion

Method  $\Rightarrow$  Practice, Rule

**Mind/Spirit**

Model  $\Rightarrow$  Academy, Antiquity, Copy/Original, Idea, Imagination,  
Imitation, Studio

Modern  $\Rightarrow$  Antiquity

Monochrome painting  $\Rightarrow$  *Chiaroscuro*

Motion  $\Rightarrow$  Attitude

Musique  $\Rightarrow$  Harmony

Naked  $\Rightarrow$  Academy, Carnation

**Naturalness/Natural**

Nature  $\Rightarrow$  Beauty, Choice, Effect, Antiquity, Genius, Imitation,  
Natural/Naturalness

**Night piece**

Nobility  $\Rightarrow$  Painting

Observation  $\Rightarrow$  Imitation, Landscape

Ordinance  $\Rightarrow$  Composition, Group

**Original/Copy**

**Ornament**

Pageantry  $\Rightarrow$  Artifice, Colour, Colouring

**Painter**

**Painting**

Palette  $\Rightarrow$  Handling

Paragon  $\Rightarrow$  Fine arts, Painting

Parergon  $\Rightarrow$  Ornament

Part of painting  $\Rightarrow$  Composition, Invention, Invention, Painting

Pattern  $\Rightarrow$  Copy/Original

Perfection  $\Rightarrow$  Antiquity, Grace, Masterpiece, Painting, School

Perspective  $\Rightarrow$  Air, Landscape,

Physiognomy  $\Rightarrow$  Air/Countenance

Pinacotheca  $\Rightarrow$  Gallery

**Pleasure**

**Portrait**

*Portrait chargé*  $\Rightarrow$  Portrait, Caricature

Posture  $\Rightarrow$  Attitude

**Practice**

Precept  $\Rightarrow$  Rule

Principle  $\Rightarrow$  Rule

**Print/Engraving**

Proneness  $\Rightarrow$  Genius

Property  $\Rightarrow$  Convenience

**Proportion**

**Public/Spectator**

Pupil  $\Rightarrow$  School

**Reddering**

**Reflection**

Relief  $\Rightarrow$  Reflection

Resemblance  $\Rightarrow$  Portrait, Caricature, Imitation, Natural/Naturalness

Repose  $\Rightarrow$  *Chiaroscuro*, Group, *Houding*

**Réveillon**

**Rule**

**School**

Science  $\Rightarrow$  Art, Drawing,

Science of a connoisseur  $\Rightarrow$  Criticism, Judgement

Sculpture  $\Rightarrow$  Fine arts

Sentiment  $\Rightarrow$  Pleasure, Spectator

Shadow  $\Rightarrow$  *Chiaroscuro*, Reflection

Shortening  $\Rightarrow$  Proportion

**Sketch**

Skill  $\Rightarrow$  Painter, Practice

Sight  $\Rightarrow$  Eye

Soul  $\Rightarrow$  Mind/Spirit

**Spectator/Beholder/Public**

Subject  $\Rightarrow$  Choice, Genre, Still-life, Painting

Suitableness  $\Rightarrow$  Convenience

**Still-life**

Story  $\Rightarrow$  History

**Studio**

Study  $\Rightarrow$  Drawing

Stuff  $\Rightarrow$  Drapery

**Style**

Subject  $\Rightarrow$  Choice, Genre, History

**Sublime**

Symmetry  $\Rightarrow$  Beauty, Proportion

Sympathy  $\Rightarrow$  Agreement, Beauty

Talent  $\Rightarrow$  Genius, Painter

**Taste**

Technique  $\Rightarrow$  Handling, Painting, Practice

**Theory**

Thought  $\Rightarrow$  Mind/Spirit

Tinct  $\Rightarrow$  Colour/Colouring

Tint  $\Rightarrow$  Harmony (of colours)

Tone  $\Rightarrow$  Colour, Colouring, Houding, Réveillon

Tool  $\Rightarrow$  Studio

Touch  $\Rightarrow$  Handling, Réveillon, Style

**True/Truth**

Ugliness  $\Rightarrow$  Beauty, Caricature

Understanding  $\Rightarrow$  Judgement, Painter

**Union**

Variety  $\Rightarrow$  Composition, Ornament

View  $\Rightarrow$  Eye, Landscape

**Vraisemblable**

Well-coloured  $\Rightarrow$  Handling

Well-designed  $\Rightarrow$  Handling

Well-disposed  $\Rightarrow$  Handling

Well-painted  $\Rightarrow$  Handling

**Whole together**

Wit  $\Rightarrow$  Genius, Mind/Spirit

Wonder  $\Rightarrow$  Sublime

Workman  $\Rightarrow$  Artist, Painter



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Série *Théorie des Arts*

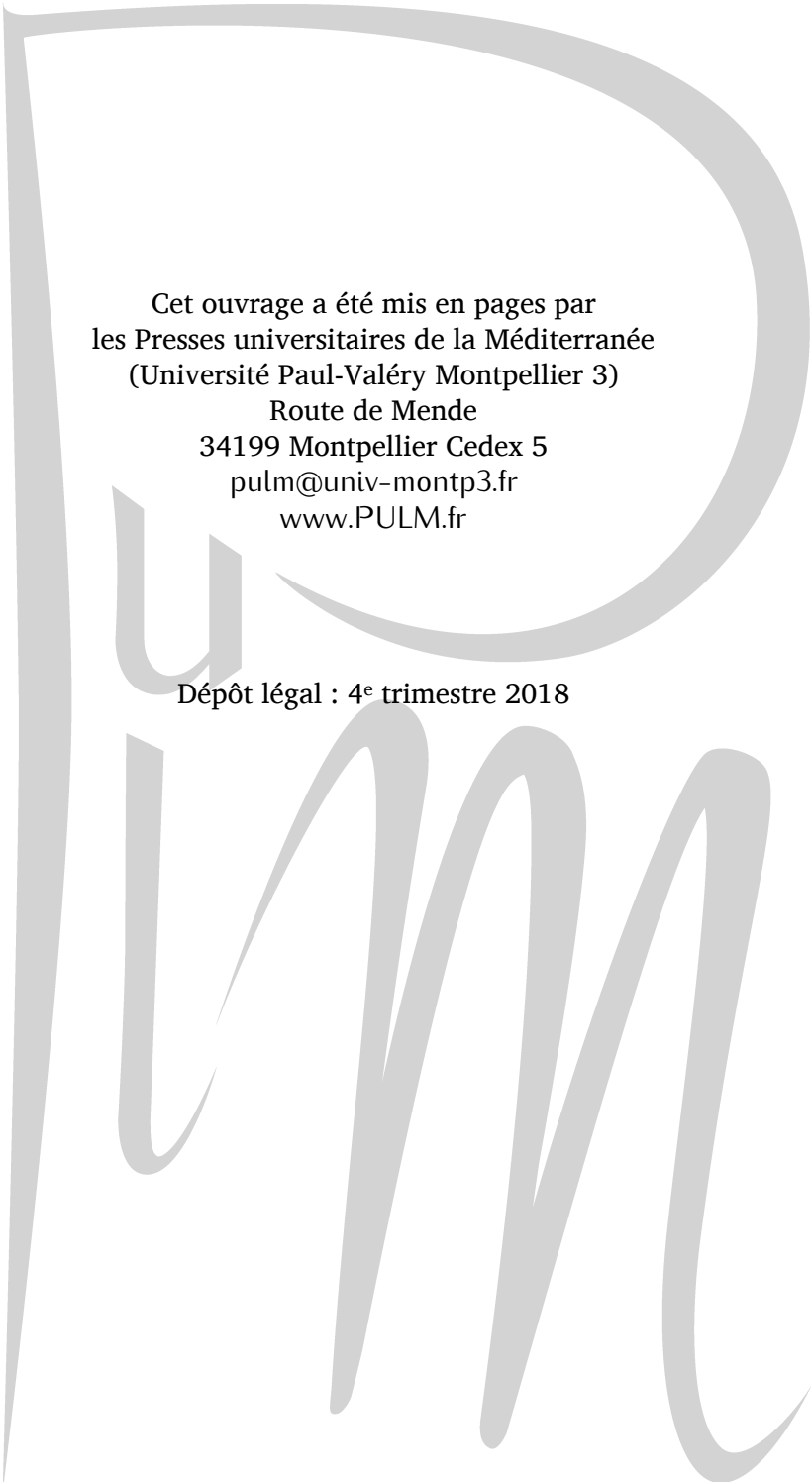
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